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MEDIA ADVISORY

Palm Beach Gardens, Fla., is Now Recognized as a HEARTSafe Community Designation

Palm Beach Gardens, Fla. — HEARTSafe Community, a national preparedness program led by Citizen CPR Foundation dedicated to improving the outcomes of sudden cardiac arrest, is proud to announce Palm Beach Gardens as one of the newest cities to become HEARTSafe.

“We are honored and proud to be able to identify ourselves as a HEARTSafe Community,” says Ashley Terrana, District Captain, Palm Beach Gardens Fire Rescue. “Our dedication to improving the lives of our citizens has always been our motivation to receive this prestigious designation.”

Palm Beach Gardens joins a host of other cities in achieving HEARTSafe designation — most recently Johnson County, Iowa and La Crosse, Wisc.

“The HEARTSafe approach combines the talents from numerous agencies and tasks them each with making specific changes in their readiness with the goal of increasing their level of preparedness,” says Richard Shok, HEARTSafe Community Program Chair. “The result is a community which has ensured they are doing everything to prevent, respond to and learn from cardiac arrest emergencies.”

Shok says becoming a HEARTSafe Community is no easy accomplishment. “Palm Beach Gardens presented a strong case for HEARTSafe designation and their community and we were pleased to review their application and approve them for designation,” Shok says.

This accreditation is a collaborative effort.

To become HEARTSafe, the community must fulfill 13 criteria. Some of these requirements include establishing a lead organization to guide and coordinate local efforts, training 15 percent of the community population every year, developing and implementing strategies to improve public awareness and bystander intervention, permanently placing automated external defibrillators (AEDs) that can be quickly and reliably accessed, recognizing rescuers for their lifesaving efforts among other critical requisites. For a comprehensive list of criteria in order to become a HEARTSafe Community, click [here](#).

HEARTSafe Community allowed Palm Beach Gardens Fire Rescue to partner with residents and business owners with the common goal of saving lives. “They took pride in the fact that their actions directly contributed to our success and this designation demonstrated our dedication and willingness to go above and beyond to improve our level of service,” says Terrana. “Additionally, our residents and business owners feel more connected to the community knowing that we could not have received this prestigious designation without their help. This is something we accomplished together.”



Palm Beach Gardens Fire Rescue relies on data to identify trends to improve the level of service, a HEARTSafe criteria.

“One hundred percent of our neurologically intact cardiac arrest patients received bystander CPR prior to the arrival of fire rescue,” says Terrana. “The fact is that our community is a vital link in the successful resuscitation of cardiac arrest patients.”

The Citizen CPR Foundation is proud to add Palm Beach Gardens as a HEARTSafe Community to its growing list of cities taking action to improve sudden cardiac arrest survival.

“We are so excited about the amazing work being done to improve recognition, response, care and outcomes in Palm Beach Gardens,” says Stuart Berger, MD, President of Citizen CPR Foundation Board and Division Head of Cardiology at the Children’s Hospital of Chicago. “This will save lives and is an excellent example of how communities can leverage resources to save hearts too young to die. We are so thankful to all who have worked to achieve this designation.”

Throughout February, Palm Beach Gardens will continue to teach Hands-Only CPR and AED use to over 650 city employees. “We have proclaimed this month Heart Month and what better month than to drive home the importance of knowing Hands-Only CPR, signs and symptoms of a heart attack and how to use an AED,” says Terrana.

In addition, Palm Beach Gardens will have multiple large-scale events and will continue to have fire rescue and community education personnel on-site teaching Hands-Only CPR. “These community events give our firefighter paramedics an opportunity to interact with the public and teach them the importance of bystander CPR,” says Terrana.

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About the Citizen CPR Foundation

The mission of the Citizen CPR Foundation is to save lives from sudden cardiac arrest by stimulating effective community, professional and citizen action. This mission is put into action through three core values: We know that CPR and AED use saves lives. Collaboration among citizens, professionals, communities, and organizations is key to survival from cardiac arrest. Action based on best practices in science, education, and implementation improves outcomes. www.citizencpr.org

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