



SASSAFRAS-FERNY CREEK FIRE BRIGADE

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Life saving equipment welcomed

Sassafras-Ferny Creek Fire Brigade has become one of the first volunteer brigades in the State to acquire automated external defibrillators (AEDs), used in the treatment of heart attacks.

The devices will be carried on two of the brigade's vehicles and are recorded in a database maintained by Ambulance Victoria. Defibrillators have saved countless lives when used in combination with rapid intervention CPR. CFA brigades are now allowed to install the devices following a recent change in policy.

CFA Chief Officer Euan Ferguson was on hand to formally present the two defibrillators when he visited the station as part of CFA Sunday on 20 November. He commended the brigade on its initiative in obtaining the defibrillators.

Sassafras-Ferny Creek Captain John Schauble said the brigade had purchased the devices, valued at close to \$6000, with money raised directly from the local community.

"It's great equipment to have and it's comforting to know it's there, but we certainly hope we will never need to use it," he said.

The use of defibrillators in the treatment of sudden cardiac arrest greatly increases the chances of a patient's survival over CPR alone.

Mr Schauble praised the generosity of the local community, which each year donates money to the brigade enabling the purchase and maintenance of specialist equipment.

Sassafras-Ferny Creek was one of a number of brigades open across the Dandenongs for CFA Sunday and among 400 stations open statewide. The day was an opportunity for people to drop in and learn a little more about their local brigade, pick up tips on fire prevention or just say "G'day".

Representatives from most brigades in the Dandenong Ranges Group also attended to receive certificates of appreciation for their work during the 2009 Black Saturday bushfire campaign.



CFA Chief Officer Euan Ferguson (l) presents the defibrillator to Sassafra-Ferry Creek Captain John Schauble