



## CASE STUDY

# An AED Worth its Salt



It was still dark when Mike Smith, a surface electrician at the American Rock Salt Company's Hampton Corners Mine in Mt. Morris, New York, arrived for work at 4:30 a.m. on February 18. Mike liked to get to work a half-hour early for the first shift.

A member of the mine's rescue team with two decades of first aid training, Mike was the first person to see his colleague Greg Kurelko, 46, coming off the third shift as a surface maintenance worker and group leader.

Mike recalls Greg complaining of chest pains and sweating. "He was pale and gray. I took him into the break room to check him over, and then quickly thought of who was at the mine with EMT experience I could call for help."

The first person who came to mind was John Ayers, an underground machine scale operator with years of EMT and firefighter experience. John was also the one who helped set up the mine's AED (automated external defibrillator) program.

While Mike ran to get John, Greg went to get a cup of coffee. "I thought I had a stomach bug," he recalls. "I thought it was nothing major. The last thing I remember was going to get a cup of coffee, and then I blacked out."

Colin Keller ran to the Control Room to call 911 while another co-worker stayed with Greg. When Mike and John returned 30 seconds later, Greg was lying on the floor.

"I knew what was going on—I'd seen it over the years—so I called 'Man down' on my pager and checked for a pulse," says John. "I couldn't find a pulse, so I cut Greg's sweatshirt with my knife, and that's when other co-workers came in with the AED."

John hooked up the ZOLL® AED Plus® to Greg. It immediately advised a shock, which John administered. The AED then advised cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR). As the second round of CPR started, Colin and John heard Greg say, "Ow."

**The ZOLL AED Plus, the first and only full-rescue AED that provides Real CPR Help® for depth and rate of chest compressions, audibly coaches rescuers with prompts such as "Push Harder" or "Good Compressions" during CPR.**



*"The AED Plus takes over and helps keep you calm. It worked perfectly."*

*John Ayers, Underground Machine Scale Operator*

"I couldn't believe Greg was awake," says John. From the time he collapsed to when he came back, it was about three minutes." The paramedics, who were alerted by Colin after the man down page, arrived on the scene a minute or two later. "Having the AED there really made a difference time-wise."



John was the one who originally recommended the AED Plus to the company. He singled it out for its Real CPR Help® technology, which provides real-time feedback on the depth and rate of compressions, so rescuers know if they're providing "Good Compressions" or need to "Push Harder."

"When you're working on a friend or coworker, I don't care how much you've been trained, your brain can go south," says John. "The AED Plus takes over and helps keep you calm. It worked perfectly."

The Hampton Corners Mine, which is the largest operating salt mine in the United States, has five AEDs underground and four on the surface. "Every year our mine grows," says Dave Cichelli, the mine's Safety Manager. "By 2004, we were so large we realized we needed additional protection for our workers. While the surface doesn't grow, our mine grows 10 feet a day, every day. We have many stations underground, as well as above, in case of an emergency."

All 300 American Rock Salt employees are required by the Mine Safety and Health Administration to attend eight hours of safety training every year as well as an initial 40-hour training. Since 1979, the mine also has been offering optional annual first aid training through the American Red Cross. Approximately one-third of the mine's employees are Red Cross certified.



Cardiac arrest victim Greg Kurelko's American Rock Salt colleagues (left to right): John Ayers, Mike Smith, and Dave Cichelli.

"American Rock Salt understands the importance of first aid, CPR, and AED training—and retraining—to help save a life," says Joyce D. Klein, an American Red Cross training specialist, Western New York Territory. "The AED Plus walks rescuers through the steps, reinforcing what we teach so rescuers can do what they need to do without hesitation."

Just two months after experiencing sudden cardiac arrest and receiving a stent, Greg was back at work actively repairing the machines. "I'm feeling 20 years younger," he says, adding, "We're a small group of five on the third shift, and we all stick together. I couldn't have asked for a better situation. It was like it had been done a thousand times. But I wouldn't be back if I didn't have the AED. I needed that machine and my co-workers, who were able to follow the AED's directives."

For more information on the ZOLL AED Plus, please call 800-804-4356 or go to [www.zoll.com/aedplus](http://www.zoll.com/aedplus).

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