



## Sturbridge, Mass. fire department stocks new pet resuscitation kits

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(NECN: Kristen Carosa) - New life-saving equipment is now stocked and ready at the Sturbridge Fire Department.

"In this business, you have to be prepared for the unexpected at any given time," said firefighter and EMT Marylou Volpe of Sturbridge, Mass.

Firefighters will now not only be able to save the lives of people, but pets, too. Every fire truck is now equipped with a pet oxygen mask kit.

"We have a small [mask] that would be utilized for cats," said Volpe. "You have the larger masks for the larger dogs."

Volpe says the masks work much like human masks do. They connect to an oxygen tank with tubing. If necessary, a bag valve device can be attached to the mask to give air to an animal that isn't breathing.

"If the animals have any smoke inhalation or are not breathing, we can utilize these masks," said Volpe.

The kits came from the Massachusetts Veterinary Medical Association in Marlborough.

"It was pretty much a no brainer," said Susan Curtis from MVMA. "We are a group of veterinarians and we wanted to save animals."

The association's pet oxygen mask program was created in 2008. Since then, the group has given out hundreds of kits.

"Our goal was to donate at least one mask kit for every city or town in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts," said Curtis. "We have donated well over 350 to date. We think that almost every community is outfitted right now."

"Pets are very, very important to people," said Volpe. "I think it's very important that we have these so that we can help the animals when we're on scene."