

Project Lifesaver

Burlington County Task Force



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Project Lifesaver protects wandering patients and gives peace of mind to caregivers, families and communities.

Project Lifesaver is an innovative rapid response program aiding victims and families suffering from Alzheimer's disease and related disorders such as Down syndrome and Autism.

By forming partnerships with local law enforcement and public safety organizations, Project Lifesaver deploys specially trained teams with the most reliable technology available to quickly locate and return wandering adults and children to their families and caregivers.

Over 5,000,000 people in the USA have Alzheimer's. That number will triple by 2050. Well over 50% of these people wander and become lost. **A lost person with Alzheimer's or other dementia represents a *critical emergency*.** They are unaware of their situation; they do not call out for help and do not respond to people calling out to them. Nearly half of them will die and many can become injured or fall victim to predators if they are not located within 24 hours. **The number of people, families and communities experiencing this risk will grow dramatically in the next several years.**

If you are not yet touched in some way by Alzheimer's or a related disorder, chances are you will be within the next several years. You will find it among neighbors, your friends, co-workers and their families, and perhaps within your own family.

Project Lifesaver, a non-profit international organization, has become internationally recognized as an aggressive and proven program that saves lives. **It is an *active response to the problem of locating wandering patients before they fall victim to the elements, accidents, or predators.***

How Project Lifesaver Works. Project Lifesaver relies on proven radio technology and a specially trained search and rescue teams. People who are part of the Project Lifesaver program wear a personalized wristband that emits a tracking signal. When caregivers notify the local Project Lifesaver agency that the person is missing, a search and rescue team responds to the wanderer's area and starts searching with the mobile locater tracking system. **Search times have been reduced from hours and days to minutes.**

The Project Lifesaver wristband is much more than a passive ID bracelet. It is a one-ounce battery-operated radio wrist transmitter emitting an automatic tracking signal every second, 24 hours a day. The signal is tracked on the ground or in the air over several miles. As each wristband has a unique radio frequency, the Project Lifesaver search team positively locates and identifies the person who has wandered away from home or a care facility.

Leading the Way with Rapid Response and Reliable Equipment. While the Alzheimer's Association's Safe Return program is a very good registry service providing information, identification and notification, **Project Lifesaver trains, equips and deploys law enforcement and public safety agencies to rapidly locate wandering people and bring them home.** Project Lifesaver's radio frequency equipment is the most reliable and practical technology available in locating the missing and wandering. Our assessment of the Global Positioning System (GPS) equipment now available is that it is less durable, can fail in bad weather, and its signal is often undetected indoors, under trees, and in any area that blocks sunlight. Another major reliability factor is the power source(s). GPS detection and notification systems for the wandering individual rely on AC power while their personal GPS equipment relies on batteries that last hours or 1-2 days. Project Lifesaver's battery provides a continuous signal for 30-45 days.

Technology is Only Half the Story. Project Lifesaver is about people and partnerships. The focus is on individual communities where law enforcement, civic groups, local business and the caregivers join in developing and strengthening all aspects of the program including rescues, fundraising and education.

Members of the Project Lifesaver team are specially trained, not only in use of the electronic tracking equipment, but especially in the methods to communicate with a person who has Alzheimer's disease or related disorder. Locating the individual is only part of the mission. The person who is located will be disoriented, anxious, and untrusting. **The Project Lifesaver team knows how to approach the person, gain their trust and put them at ease for the trip home.**

Funding Project Lifesaver depends upon the support of the community. **Project Lifesaver's goal is to provide the benefits of the program to all in need regardless of their ability to pay.** Funding for the organization comes from private donations and grants from government, corporations and charitable foundations. All contributions made to Project Lifesaver are tax deductible and are used directly for program operations including rescues, equipment and education. **The cost of Project Lifesaver per patient is approximately \$300 and \$25 monthly for battery and band replacement.**



Project Lifesaver
Transmitter Wristband



Project Lifesaver
Receiver



Project Lifesaver wristband shown with its internal
transmitter removed for inspection