



Citation for 2005 Russell Medal
Awarded to David Kerr of Orleans, Ontario, Canada

For 16-year-old David Kerr, the sight and sound of lightning hitting the ground almost directly in front of him was not the scariest moment in his young life, but finding out that someone close by had been struck by lightning was.

On 13 July 2005 David, just one exam away from receiving his National Life Saving certification, was with friends at a shopping centre when he heard a woman screaming for help: “My husband has been hit by lightning”. David followed her and found a man lying on his back.

In that moment, David didn’t think he would need to help, but realising no one else knew what to do, he immediately sprang into action. He checked the man's condition using the Airway, Breathing and Circulation checklist and found the man had no vital signs. There were no obvious signs of entry and exit points from the lightning, and David relayed this to a bystander who had telephoned the Emergency Medical Services. David immediately began Cardio-Pulmonary Resuscitation until another bystander offered help and assisted him until the Emergency Services arrived.

Paramedics later praised the rescue effort and confirmed that David's action contributed to saving the man’s life. Reports said the man had burn marks on his stomach indicating he was hit directly by the bolt.

For his courage and quick emergency response David Kerr is awarded the 2005 Russell Medal. The Lifesaving Society also honoured David with the Society's Rescue Award of Merit.