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Kanawha County medics deployed to help Hurricane Sandy response

KCEAA EMS personnel left early today for New Jersey

As Hurricane Sandy's landfall looms, Kanawha County Emergency Ambulance Authority early today deployed personnel to help in the response.

KCEAA sent five ambulances and one support vehicle staffed by a total of 13 seasoned personnel to an Air Force base in New Jersey, where the superstorm is expected to make landfall sometime today.

KCEAA's role will be to supplement American Medical Resources (AMR) by having extra ambulances to fill the anticipated needs in this area. They will become part of a large EMS system, providing ALS service in the region. This task force is by FEMA definition an EMS "strike team," which is five like apparatus that arrive at a base and become part of the overall response. The crew is expected to be deployed for one week.

The five ambulances responding are vehicles that have been maintained and inventoried at KCEAA headquarters for this type of function both locally and regionally, and they are not part of the day-to-day fleet. KCEAA remains well staffed with its daily operating fleet to take care of the citizens of Kanawha County.

This type of deployment is a great learning experience, to be fully reimbursed by the federal government, and affords personnel the opportunity to operate in a global EMS system.

"We pride ourselves at KCEAA as a world-class ambulance service that can function in this capacity, learn from these missions, and use what we have learned to better the service we provide to Kanawha County," said Joe Lynch, executive director.

Three paramedics will serve as public information officers to various news agencies. Each will be able to give live reports, and possibly video when circumstances allow. This extreme weather poses danger for your first responders, whether in Kanawha County or 500 miles away. Please keep them in your thoughts and prayers.

For more information, contact Carolyn Karr Charnock at 304.345.2312 ext. 175

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