



JOINT NEWS RELEASE

Greater Kalamazoo Area Chapter
*Serving the people of Allegan, Cass,
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For Immediate Release

County Emergency Operations Center Exercise

KALAMAZOO, MI, - Apr. 20, 2009 – As we approach spring, Mother Nature shows us her penchant for sudden change as the weather fluctuates from sunny and seventy degrees to windy, rainy and cold. These conditions serve as a warning for the severe weather that is naturally a part of spring in our area. The Kalamazoo County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) will hold a very timely and important drill on a large scale disaster based on a severe spring storm. The Greater Kalamazoo Area Chapter of the American Red Cross is one of more than a dozen agencies who will participate in the exercise scheduled for Wednesday, April 22 at the local Red Cross Chapter facility.

This is a table top exercise involving Annexes from the EOC staff including: Executive, Emergency Management, Communications/Warning, Operations, Law Enforcement, Fire Service, EMS, Medical Control, both local Hospitals, Medical Examiner, Health Dept., State Human Services, Red Cross, Airport Administration, Damage Assessment, Road Commission, and RACES.

The drill is designed to test the EOC abilities and plans for: Mitigation of a pending storm, Response of resources from all annexes, and plans and skills needed to implement a speedy and thorough Recovery from the storm throughout the community. “The drill is a vital part of continuing review and improvement to the County Emergency Plan” said Lt. Paul R. Baker, the County Emergency Management Director. “Drills such as these allow the EOC and all of its partners to sharpen readiness skills and uncover any weaknesses that could hamper an effective response to a large scale community disaster”.

The citizens of Kalamazoo County need to know that the agencies they trust to perform in a disaster have the knowledge, plans and skills to respond at a moment’s notice. The many agencies that play a part in community safety and recovery work together to assure that we are all ready when the time comes.

About the Kalamazoo EOC:

The Emergency Operation Center is the core location for the coordination of resources during a major disaster event. This Center is staffed with representatives from 30 different disciplines including: first responders, government agencies and private sector. The EOC operates under the direction of the Kalamazoo County Office of Emergency Management.

About the American Red Cross:

The American Red Cross shelters, feeds and counsels victims of disasters; provides nearly half of the nation's blood supply; teaches lifesaving skills; and supports military members and their families. The Red Cross is a charitable organization – not a government agency- and depends on volunteers and the generosity of the American public to perform its humanitarian mission. For more information on the Greater Kalamazoo Area Chapter of the American Red Cross, please visit www.greaterkzooredcross.org.

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