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Public Health
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Shelby County Health Department and Mid-South Hospitals Plan Mass Casualty Exercise

MEMPHIS – The Shelby County Health Department and the Mid-South Emergency Planning Coalition, a partnership of Mid-South area hospitals and other health care facilities, are conducting a full-scale exercise at Agricenter International on Wednesday, October 17, 2018. The purpose of the exercise is to test the ability of the local Health Department, hospitals, and health care agencies to respond to a mass casualty event, in this case, a simulated passenger airline crash due to severe weather conditions.

“This exercise will be a valuable experience for all participating agencies,” said Rick Keith, Manager, City of Memphis Office of Emergency Management and Executive Council Chairman of the Mid-South Emergency Planning Coalition. “We are grateful for the opportunity to work with local agencies to simulate an event that could occur in the Mid-South, given the increase in intensity of severe storms. Consistently testing our response plans and capabilities allows us to ensure we are prepared to meet the needs of the public and our staff, regardless of the size and scope of the disaster.”

“This full-scale exercise will allow Health Department first responders to team up with partnering organizations of the Mid-South Emergency Planning Coalition, testing our abilities to effectively communicate and coordinate a response in the event of a regional disaster,” said Health Department Director Dr. Alisa R. Haushalter.

Volunteers from local high schools, colleges/universities and members of the Health Department’s Medical Reserve Corps will pose as injured passengers who will be transported to hospital emergency rooms, testing the hospitals’ capacity to care for a sudden influx of patients. Volunteer “victims” will be made up with moulage makeup, simulating injuries such as burns and severe crash-related injuries. Both makeup artists and volunteers enjoy the challenge of simulating life-threatening injuries, while contributing to our local emergency preparedness. In addition to playing their role as patients, volunteers get a behind-the-scenes look at real-life disaster response activities.

Participating hospitals and health care providers will be testing their emergency department capacities while continuing to provide a safe environment for current patients and staff. Daily operations and patient care WILL NOT be impacted.

The Mid-South Emergency Planning Coalition is a partnership between health care systems, public health agencies, and emergency management organizations from a 3-state, 6-county region, including Shelby, Tipton, Fayette and Lauderdale counties in Tennessee; Desoto County, Mississippi; and Crittenden County, Arkansas.

The mission of the Mid-South Emergency Planning Coalition is to support the development of cooperative partnerships that promote and enhance the well-being of the community’s health care system through coordinated disaster preparedness, education, public information, response/recovery activities, and sharing of resources. For more information, visit the Coalition’s website:

Mission

To promote, protect and improve the health and environment of all Shelby County residents.

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www.midsouthepc.org/. For more information about the Shelby County Health Department's Public Health Preparedness program, visit www.shelbytnhealth.com.

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