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Increased Emergency Presence for Multi-Agency Disaster Training Exercise Aug. 5-6

(COLUMBUS, Ohio) — Next week, the Division of State Fire Marshal will serve as the site of a national-level disaster preparedness exercise known as [Vigilant Guard 2019](#).

Scheduled for Aug. 5-8, Vigilant Guard 2019 is a four-day exercise designed to test the state's disaster and emergency response capabilities with a simulated cyberattack event that subsequently causes utility failures and disruptions. Emergency response to hazardous material accidents, civil disturbances, and radiological incidents will also be tested.

During the first two days of the exercise – Aug. 5-6 – there will be an increased emergency personnel presence in the area, including: military personnel, aircraft and equipment, first responders and emergency vehicles, as well as civilian volunteers serving as mock accident victims. Officials want residents to know this is only for training purposes and they should not be alarmed.

The exercise – which will take place at the Ohio Fire Academy, 8895 East Main Street in Reynoldsburg – will bring local, state, federal and military partners together to practice a coordinated, full-scale emergency response plan.

“Most large-scale incidents start at the local level and sometimes the locals aren't aware of the assets their state and federal partners can bring to the table,” said State Fire Marshal Jeff Hussey. “Collaboration between local, state and federal partners is crucial in developing a plan to mitigate these large-scale incidents and ensure the public is safe.”

Exercise activities and venues will take place in the following counties throughout Ohio: Athens, Clark, Columbiana, Franklin, Greene, Guernsey, Hamilton, Licking, Knox, Portage, and Washington.

Vigilant Guard 2019 is hosted by the Ohio National Guard and the Ohio Emergency Management Agency and cosponsored by the U.S. Northern Command and National Guard Bureau.

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