

Training Exercise at Highland 2016

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HCC, FHN, and local emergency responders to hold combined training exercise July 22

Highland Community College and FHN are partnering with the Stephenson County Emergency Management Agency (EMA) and regional emergency medical responders, fire, and law enforcement agencies to conduct a combined crisis response training exercise on Friday, July 22, 2016. The exercise will be held from 8 a.m. to noon in and around the Dorothy and RC Clock Technology Center on the HCC campus.

The HCC campus community and general public should be aware that the full-scale training exercise is taking place and that multiple emergency responders, public safety vehicles, mock perpetrators, and victims will be engaged in the exercise. During the exercise, both Pearl City Road entrances to the Highland campus will be closed from approximately 7:30 a.m. to noon, while the Kiwanis Drive access road to campus will remain open.

The purpose of this live drill is to afford first responders and HCC staff the opportunity to engage in realistic training to ensure the safety of area residents and the HCC community in the event of an actual emergency.

Over 20 area emergency response agencies and organizations are planning to take part in the training exercise including FHN, Stephenson County EMA; Stephenson County Sheriff's Department, Sheriff's Office, Sheriff's Reserve and Mounted Patrol; Freeport Police Department and Auxiliary, Freeport Fire Department, Freeport Rural Fire Department, Freeport Rural Ambulance, and eight area volunteer fire and ambulance departments. The Northwest Illinois Chapter of the American Red Cross and the HCC Retired and Senior Volunteer Program will provide support.

"The exercise is being designed to provide a valuable learning experience for everyone participating," said Jill Janssen, HCC vice president of administrative services, who oversees Highland's emergency response plan. "This will be a vital exercise for the College to participate in to help ensure that our lead staff and local emergency responders are familiar with policies put in place to help protect our students and campus community."

"FHN plays a pivotal role in community preparedness. Working with our community partners in the EMS, Fire, and Law Enforcement fields is an ongoing process in preparing everyone to respond in a crisis situation," said Doug Toepfer, FHN emergency preparedness coordinator. "The opportunity to work with HCC and bring them into our preparedness training is very exciting. This exercise is just one of many that FHN conducts or participates in every year. Preparing for the 'what ifs' is what emergency preparedness is all about."

For more information regarding the exercise, contact Stephenson County EMA director, Robert

Baker at robert.baker@stcoema.org or 815.599.0344. Media inquiries should be directed to Highland director of marketing and community relations, Pete Willging, at pete.willging@highland.edu or 815.599.3421.

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