Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MOCK TERRORIST ATTACK AT GRAFTON CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTION
Twenty-two agencies participate in full-scale exercise

GRAFTON, Ohio – A terrorist attack in Lorain County has caused numerous fatalities, injuries and wide-spread panic throughout the community after a stolen tanker truck explodes on the Grafton Correctional Institution Farm. Officials are confirming that terrorists have struck on Ohio soil. This could be a real scenario, but today it is an exercise designed to test federal, state and local agencies.

This scenario is what the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction (DRC), the Ohio Emergency Management Agency (Ohio EMA), and 20 other federal, state and local agencies, deal with as they participate in a Chemical Weapons Full-Scale Terrorism Exercise, Thursday, August 31.

The purpose of the exercise is to ensure a state of readiness in protecting the public, should a terrorist attack occur. Emergency operations plans will be exercised with the intent that local, state and federal agencies will improve their operational readiness and enhance their capability to manage emergencies.

“Each of our institutions routinely conducts critical incident management exercises in order to train staff in the event of an actual emergency," said DRC Director Terry J. Collins. "When the opportunity to partner with EMA to stage this valuable training exercise presented itself, DRC eagerly agreed.”

The exercise requires field responders to perform actions associated with initial response to chemical terrorist incidents. Actions include victim rescue; triage; treatment and decontamination; site security and crowd control; device recovery and packaging; and emergency public information.

“Exercises like this create strong working relationships which are imperative in a disaster,” Ohio EMA Executive Director Nancy Dragani said. “The more times we can work together during training and exercises, the better Ohio’s response will be during an actual event.”

Sponsored by the State of Ohio Homeland Security Grant Exercise Program under the Ohio EMA, the exercise will be conducted in a no-fault learning environment as a practical training tool for state emergency responders and support personnel.

Other agencies participating include: Carlisle Fire Department; Columbia Fire Department; Eaton Township Fire Department; Federal Bureau of Investigation; Grafton Police Department; Grafton Fire Department; Grafton Township Fire Department; Life Care Ambulance; Life Flight Helicopter Service; Lorain County Emergency Management Agency; Lorain County EMH – Regional Hospital; Lorain County HazMat Team; Lorain County Sheriff’s Office; Ohio EMA; Ohio Department of Agriculture; Ohio Department of Transportation; Ohio Environmental Protection Agency; Ohio Homeland Security Division; and the Ohio State Highway Patrol posts located in Ashland, Elyria and Mansfield.

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