



For Immediate Release

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State of Ohio Participates in National-Level Military Exercise

Ohio National Guard, state and local agencies take part in multi-hazard exercise, Aug. 5-8

Columbus, OH – The Ohio National Guard (OHNG) and Ohio Emergency Management Agency (Ohio EMA) are the hosts of Vigilant Guard 2019 (VG19), a national-level exercise that is cosponsored by the U.S. Northern Command and the National Guard Bureau.

Scheduled for August 5-8, 2019, VG19 is a four-day exercise that will test the state's disaster and emergency response capabilities to a cyber-event that subsequently causes simulated utility failures and disruptions. Emergency response to hazardous material accidents, civil disturbances, and radiological incidents will also be tested.

"Vigilant Guard will put Ohio's emergency response capabilities to the test in a worst-case scenario to help us prepare for a real-life threat to the health and safety of Ohioans," said Governor DeWine. "An exercise of this magnitude requires cooperation across all levels of government, and I commend the efforts of everyone involved for their hard work to make sure we have a successful outcome."

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

"Vigilant Guard is an exciting opportunity to test and showcase the coordinated disaster response and recovery abilities of Ohio's military and civilian personnel," said Ohio EMA Executive Director Sima Merick. "This exercise will enable us to practice our emergency response plans and procedures using a whole community approach. It will make us all better able to serve our great citizens and make our state a safer Ohio."

"This will be the largest exercise Ohio has ever conducted. We will have 90 local, state and federal agencies from across the country participating in Vigilant Guard," according to Maj. Gen. John C. Harris Jr., Ohio adjutant general. "This exercise will allow us, as one joint force, to comprehensively test the readiness of the National Guard alongside our partner agencies in order to be better prepared to protect our citizens and our state when a disaster hits."

The public may notice a heavier-than-usual presence of military personnel, aircraft and equipment, first responders, and emergency vehicles. VG19 will also have civilian volunteers as mock accident victims. Emergency responders will exercise search and rescue, medical trauma treatment, and first aid application.

For additional information on emergency preparedness, visit: www.ema.ohio.gov and www.ready.ohio.gov

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