

PRESS RELEASE

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COUNTY TO TEST EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN

For Immediate Release:

Cuyahoga County officials will get an idea of how well local emergency workers in the county respond to a hazardous materials emergency, when it stages its annual disaster training drill May 16, 2009 **from 9:15 a.m. to noon at the** Transflo facility in the flats, 2700 W. 3rd St., Cleveland. Media is invited to attend and should check in with the on scene Public Information Officer for information and instructions upon arrival.

Cuyahoga County Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) and Cuyahoga County Emergency Management are sponsoring the test, which will involve **the Southwest Hazmat Team, Cleveland Fire Department, Cleveland Police and Bomb Squad, Urban Search and Rescue Team, Cleveland Emergency Medical Team, employees from the Transflo facility** as well as others.

“Having a hazardous materials emergency response plan for Cuyahoga County is important for the health and welfare of our community,” said Melissa Rodrigo, Manager of Cuyahoga County Emergency Management, the local agency responsible for coordinating Hazardous Material planning. “Testing the plan enhances our local preparedness and response capabilities.”

The local departments and first responders have worked together to develop plans and procedures in the event of a hazardous materials accident as part of the County’s overall planning for chemical emergency response.

“After 9/11, the emergency response community learned that the magnitude of an incident may exceed local resources”, SERT Hazmat Director Jeff Branich said. “Multiple incidents occurring at the same time may exhaust a community’s local resources as well. A full-scale exercise such as this allows all the participating agencies to exercise the skill sets necessary to work effectively under a single command structure. This is a critical component of successful incident mitigation”.