

Dept. of Military Affairs: National Guard, Wisconsin Emergency Management to conduct disaster exercise

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by Wisconsin Department of Military Affairs

VOLK FIELD, Wis. — A natural disaster can strike any time, and the National Guard, along with state and county emergency management agencies, will conduct a disaster readiness exercise called PATRIOT North, beginning Tuesday, July 17.

PATRIOT North is a joint agency civilian and military exercise, sponsored by the National Guard Bureau (NGB), taking place at Fort McCoy Total Force Training Center and Volk Field Combat Readiness Training Center, Wisconsin, July 17-19. This training exercise — designed to require civilian emergency management and responders work with military entities in the same manner that they would during disasters — will test the Wisconsin Emergency Management and National Guard's abilities to support response operations based on simulated emergency scenarios such as an earthquake creating collapsed buildings, mass casualties and the need for search and rescue along with injury evacuations.

“Many Guardsmen haven't had the opportunity to work in this type of environment and PATRIOT gives our Soldiers and Airmen a chance to hone their skills to respond to a natural disaster and work with emergency management agencies,” said Lt. Col. Roger Brooks, exercise director for PATRIOT. “This exercise will help all of us prepare for any disaster.”

Brooks added residents in parts of Juneau and Monroe counties may see an increase in military equipment moving along roads and interstates, as well as aircraft flying, during the exercise.

Nearly 900 civilians, volunteers and National Guard Soldiers and Airmen from more than 20 states are supporting this year's exercise. Other partners participating include Mile Bluff Medical Center, Team Rubicon, The Salvation Army, FEMA and the Civil Air Patrol. The exercise provides the National Guard an opportunity to improve cooperation and relationships with its regional civilian, military and federal partners in preparation for emergencies and catastrophic events.