

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Tennessee Deploys Swift Water Rescue Teams to South Carolina for Catastrophic Flood Response

Nashville, Tenn. –The Tennessee Emergency Management Agency (TEMA), Tennessee’s Fire Marshal’s Office, and another 14 state and local agencies are providing swift water rescue personnel and equipment to South Carolina today as the state faces catastrophic flooding from Hurricane Joaquin.

Tennessee is sending nine swift water rescue teams to South Carolina, with a total of 83 personnel and more than 20 boats and water craft. This is Tennessee’s largest support effort to another state in an emergency since Hurricane Katrina in 2005.

“Tennessee has some of the best-trained, most-capable swift water rescue teams in the Southeast,” said TEMA Deputy Commissioner David Purkey. “I’m thankful we have such dedicated professionals willing to help others in their time of greatest need.”

“We have kept Gov. Haslam and his staff updated throughout the weekend on South Carolina’s needs and they have been fully supportive,” Purkey added.

State and local agencies deploying personnel and equipment to South Carolina include:

- Ashland City Fire Department
- Bradley County Fire and Rescue
- Brentwood Fire Department
- Dickson Fire Department
- Franklin Fire Department
- Knoxville Volunteer Emergency Response Squad
- Knoxville Fire Department
- City of Lavergne
- Metro Nashville Fire Department
- Montgomery County Emergency Medical Service
- Rutherford County
- Rutherford County Emergency Management Agency Special Operations Response Team

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- Williamson County Sheriff's Office
- Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency

TEMA is sending four district coordinators and two communications specialist to assist the teams during missions.

The Tennessee Fire Chief's Mutual Aid Program is supporting the South Carolina mission with its resource tracking system.

At 11 a.m., ET, four of Tennessee's teams had arrived in Columbia, SC, and another five teams deployed from TEMA's East Regional Office in Knoxville at 4 p.m., ET, to arrive this evening in Columbia.

South Carolina continues to have deteriorating conditions and expects upwards of 10 or more inches of rain in the next 12 to 24 hours as Hurricane Joaquin moves north and northwest away from the U.S. East Coast.

TEMA went to a Level IV – Elevated threat level on at 2 p.m., CT, on Friday, Oct. 1, due to the potential for Hurricane Joaquin's heavy rains reaching East Tennessee.

TEMA's mission is to coordinate preparedness, response and recovery from man-made, natural and technological hazards in a professional and efficient manner in concert with our stakeholders. More information is available at www.tnema.org.

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