

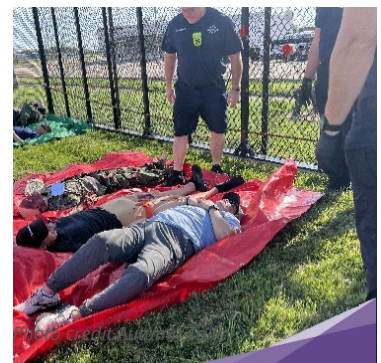
SEPTEMBER 2022

North Region EMS System Leads Collaboration Between Waukegan Fire Department and Waukegan National Airport for Mass Casualty Incident Training



Waukegan ARFF Unit E-65 simulates extinguishing an airplane fire as part of the Mass Casualty Incident training at Waukegan National Airport. Photo credit Sarah Bond.

With September being National Preparedness Month, North Region EMS System (NMnrEMSS) conducts annual training to ready responders in the event of a real Mass Casualty Incident. This year, NMnrEMSS partnered with [Waukegan Fire Department](#), [Waukegan National Airport](#), [AirMethods](#) McHenry, J.FHCC Lovell Simulation Specialists, and [Lake Forest Paramedic Program](#) to immerse responders in real-life training complete with jets, high-fidelity manikins and live patients.



The exercise simulated an unexpected airplane crash and subsequent fire on the runway at Waukegan National Airport with the potential for multiple injured victims. “Utilizing the airport as the training ground is an excellent tool to improve the behavioral outcomes of responders, as they feel more immersed in the training environment and apply their skills as they would have applied them in a real-world setting,” says Lake Forest Field Educator Sarah Bond. Community partners play a key role in the success of this large-scale simulation-based training.

Photo credit Autumn Talley.



Eighteen Lake Forest Paramedic Students arrived early the day of the exercise prepared to live action role play as patients. Members of the J.FHCC Lovell Simulation Specialists applied moulage to simulate wounds and create an authentic experience for responders. "It was really interesting seeing things from the perspective of the patients instead of the responder. I was impressed with how great the moulage looked and how fast they could apply it. I think it helped make things more realistic for the responding crews." says Paramedic Student Joe Roversi.

The goals in conducting this type of annual training is to increase provider readiness to respond, triage, treat, and transport patients from a large scale Mass Casualty Incident. By collaborating with hospital resources and multiple fire departments, response capabilities and inter-departmental relationships can be evaluated for gaps and potential future training opportunities. Just like in a real emergency, outside agencies participated in the simulated response to include [Newport Township FPD](#), [Lake Forest FD](#), [North Chicago FD](#), and [Lake Villa FPD](#). "The drill was the most realistic training we've done for something like this. There is such value in being able to train with your neighboring departments because in a real-life scenario, success depends on working seamlessly together," says Lake Forest Firefighter/Medic Katy LaCivita.



Photo credit Sarah Bond.

In a real emergency, sometimes the most critically injured patients need to be flown in a medical helicopter to the awaiting trauma center. AirMethods McHenry provides rapid transport and additional scope of practice to assist EMS and Fire with care of critical patients. During the exercise, AirMethods participated, landing on the Waukegan Airport ramp and providing advanced care to a simulated critically burned patient. Real practice is vital for successful collaboration in a real-life emergency.



NMnrEMSS wishes to extend a special thank you to the Waukegan National Airport and their partners for their participation and support.