
Rescue team from Ohio goes south to aid victims

Monday, July 11, 2005

Even before Hurricane Dennis slammed ashore yesterday, a team of Ohioans headed south to help.

President Bush mobilized a team from Ohio's Task Force One, a group of 180 search-and-rescue specialists, said Scott Hall, chief of the Bellbrook Fire Department in Greene County and a task-force spokesman.

The 30-member team includes paramedics, firefighters and four canine handlers who can look for survivors through the debris Dennis is expected to leave behind.

Among those on the team are Upper Arlington firefighters, including Chief Mitch Ross, and Columbus firefighters, including Capt. Jack Reall.

The team will stay mobilized for up to 10 days, Reall said yesterday.

Bush already had mobilized emergency teams from four other states, Hall said.

"They have teams in place on the coastline," he said. But given that the hurricane was upgraded for a time to Category 4, teams from Ohio and Indiana were dispatched yesterday.

"They are certainly worried about things that may happen inland," Hall said.

How to help

Emergency management officials recommend that those wishing to assist hurricane victims give cash donations and resist going to affected areas. The following are charitable organizations recommended by the Federal Emergency Management Agency:

- American Red Cross Disaster Relief Fund, 800-435-7669 or www.redcross.org
 - Catholic Charities, USA, 800-919-9338 or www.catholiccharitiesusa.org
 - Salvation Army, 800-725-2769 or www.1800.salarmy.org
 - United Methodist Committee on Relief, 800-554-8583 or <http://gbgm-umc.org>
 - For a complete list of charitable agencies recommended by FEMA, go to www.fema.gov/irr/help2.shtm
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