



PRESS RELEASE

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CETRONIA AMBULANCE CORPS SENDS TWO DISASTER RESPONSE TEAMS TO NEW JERSEY FOLLOWING HURRICANE SANDY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE, ALLENTOWN, PA (November 15, 2012) - As an active member of the Pennsylvania Strike Team, Cetronia Ambulance Corps provides staffing, vehicles, equipment and other resources to be utilized for major emergency and disaster response. Following Hurricane Sandy, representatives from Cetronia and the Region II Strike Team were deployed to Atlantic, Ocean and Monmouth Counties in New Jersey. Cetronia's teams operated in conjunction with other Pennsylvania EMS Strike Team's providing 911 relief, shelter support and search and rescue operations.

“We are proud to have men and women on our teams that are dedicated to disaster response, not only in our local area, but for areas throughout the country that need assistance when devastation strikes”, said Larry Wiersch, Chief Executive Officer for Cetronia Ambulance Corps. In the past, Cetronia has provided Strike Teams that were deployed to Hurricanes Katrina, Lee, Irene, and now Sandy. “Preparedness and readiness are key elements both prior to and after disaster strikes. Ensuring that we are always ready to help is a key mission that we have as an EMS agency in the community and making sure that everyone returns home safely is a true testament of success when we help others in their recovery”, said Wiersch.

The first Strike Team deployment was activated immediately following the storm, with crews departing on October 30th and returning on November 5th. Their mission was to assist NJ EMS operations by providing back up 911 services to local first aid squad's and fire departments that lost their equipment during the storm. Support was also provided to medical staffing at the Red Cross shelters and assistance in transporting special needs residents. “This mission once again proved that EMS is about helping others and working together as a team regardless of the background or patch that is worn. The countless number of citizens that showed their appreciation by saying thank you, waving or coming to the base camp to provide food

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demonstrated that our teams were greatly appreciated, “said Michael LaPearl, Cetronia Ambulance Corps EMT-P, Operations Supervisor and Strike Team #1 Lead.

On November 2nd, a second team was activated, which returned on November 10th. Their mission was to primarily assist with the 911 response in the towns of Hazlet, Union Beach and Keyport. “Union Beach was hit the hardest; their EMS company lost all of its equipment and its station. When we arrived on scene, the Union Beach EMS Chief was so happy we came to help that he cried. A lot of the time it feels like EMS isn’t appreciated or that we are the tail end of the funding line. It’s things like this that make it all worthwhile,” stated Brad Miller, EMT-P, Crew Chief and Strike Team #2 Lead for Cetronia Ambulance Corps.

The Region II Strike Team is managed by the Eastern PA EMS Council of which Cetronia Ambulance commits two ALS vehicles with four people per vehicle to the team. A total of 16 emergency personnel from Cetronia receive extensive annual training in disaster operations and are members of the regional team. Each team from Cetronia consisted of two Emergency Medical Technicians (EMT’s), two Paramedics and an Advanced Life Support (ALS) equipped ambulance, all outfitted to remain in the field without support for up to seven days. “The areas assisted by the PA EMS Strike Team were completely devastated by Hurricane Sandy. Most were without basic services for over a week and some areas lost all of their emergency equipment. All of the Strike Team crews were welcomed with an outpouring of support from the affected communities,” added Miller.

Cetronia Ambulance Corps, founded in 1955, is a non-profit, 501(c)3 community based emergency medical services provider prominently located in the Lehigh Valley. Cetronia Ambulance Corps is one of the largest providers of ambulance services in Eastern Pennsylvania; employing 125 full and part time career associates, 20 active volunteers and boasting a total fleet of 32 vehicles, including 18 ambulances, 11 para-transit vehicles, a supervisor’s vehicle, medicar and a special operations unit. Cetronia provides basic and advanced life support ambulance, para-transit, wheelchair, and stretcher van services to serve the communities emergency medical services and medical transportation needs. Cetronia Ambulance Corps is recognized by the Commission on Accreditation of Ambulance Services (CAAS) for its superior care, rapid response and performance excellence and is the only nationally accredited EMS agency in Eastern Pennsylvania, one of only seven in the state and one of only 144 in the nation. As the regional leader in High Performance EMS, Cetronia Ambulance Corps receives over 44,000 calls for service annually, covering an emergency service area that spans across 108 square miles and a non-emergency coverage area that encompasses seven counties. Cetronia Ambulance Corps provides Health on Wheels™ and is dedicated to saving lives and partnering with community every day.

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