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## **Paulding County Fire & Rescue Prepares for Hurricane Irma** Local Search & Rescue Team Activated and Headed to Disaster Area

**Dallas, Georgia – September 11, 2017** – In preparation for potential severe weather conditions later today Paulding County has opened its Emergency Operations Center (EOC).

The EOC coordinates all public safety agencies in the county including the Fire & Rescue and Sheriff's Department, Paulding Marshal's Bureau, Cities of Dallas and Hiram Police, as well as Metro Ambulance Service, Paulding County DOT, and our electric utilities

In addition to local storm preparations, several Paulding County Fire & Rescue personnel are part of the multi-agency Georgia Search and Rescue team (GSAR-6). GSAR was activated Sunday afternoon and deployed to a staging area in Central Georgia where they currently await further orders. They could be sent anywhere in the southeastern United States into a disaster area. The team, which is comprised of advanced technical rescue personnel, is prepared for various complex rescue operations requiring specialized skills and equipment. PCFD also sent a fire department boat and support vehicle in the event GSAR team members are called upon to effect water rescues.

According to Chief Joey Pelfrey, "Our County is well prepared to handle most any emergency if and when Hurricane Irma or its remnants reaches us later today. At this point we expect to be mostly dealing with trees and power lines down. However, we have added several additional fire engines and called in off-duty emergency personnel just in case. In terms of the broader state of emergency across Georgia & Florida, we are happy to have three of our Firefighters being deployed with GASR. Their mission is to assist local agencies in areas more affected by this storm. Although we hope to never have a major disaster in Paulding County we know resources like GSAR will be available if we ever need their help."



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