

South Dakota National Guard

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November 16, 2012

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Guard hazmat team trains at Homestake Mine

By Sgt. 1st Class Theanne Tangen
SDNG Public Affairs

LEAD, S.D. – The South Dakota National Guard’s 82nd Civil Support Team paired up with personnel from the Sanford Underground Research Facility to conduct an emergency response training exercise at the Homestake Mine Thursday, Nov. 15.

South Dakota’s all-hazard response team and Sanford’s emergency response team used the exercise as an opportunity to train together to respond to the release of chemical, biological or radioactive agents.

The exercise was designed around a scenario in which Sanford’s emergency response personnel noticed an unidentified, disturbing odor coming from the education and research building. Suspecting it could be a type of hazardous material, the team notified law enforcement officials of the potential threat, who then contacted the 82nd based at Ellsworth Air Force Base.

The 82nd CST dispatched their rapid response package, which includes 10 personnel and equipment and transported via two UH-60 Black Hawk helicopters.

“The point of this exercise is to use our rapid response package, which sends a small team ahead of the rest of us,” said Army Sgt. 1st Class Sgt. Alex Raber, communications noncommissioned officer for the 82nd. “They can get here and have an idea of what we are dealing with before the rest of our assets are on site. This type of response can be used for missions that are in hard to reach areas that are not easy to access with our vehicles.”

The chances of the CST team being called to respond to an incident at the Sanford Underground Research Facility is low, but may become more likely as the site becomes known around the world.

The National Science Foundation selected the Homestake Mine as the preferred site for a proposed national Deep Underground Science and Engineering Laboratory in 2007.

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“Our overall mission here is to provide beneficial space for science,” said Tom Regan, Sanford environmental health and safety support specialist. “We see this becoming more of an educational and outreach campus in support of science.”

The CST and the Sanford personnel both benefit from training together.

“This is great for our team to learn from the 82nd CST. With their expertise, it gives us a sense of security in knowing they are nearby ready to help if needed,” said Regan. “We also appreciate the opportunity to host the South Dakota National Guard by giving them a place to train in a different environment.”

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Additional stories and information are online at www.facebook.com/southdakotationalguard



121115-A-CW157-001: South Dakota National Guard pilots use two UH-60 Black Hawk helicopters to transport ten 82nd Civil Support Team personnel and their equipment to the Sanford Underground Research Facility during an emergency response training exercise with personnel from the Sanford Underground Laboratory at the Homestake Mine in Lead, S.D., Thursday, Nov. 15, 2012. (SDNG photo by Sgt. 1st Class Theanne



121115-A-CW157-008: Members of the South Dakota National Guard’s 82nd Civil Support Team unload their equipment from a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter during an emergency response training exercise with personnel from the Sanford Underground Research Facility at the Homestake Mine in Lead, S.D., Thursday, Nov. 15, 2012. (SDNG photo by Sgt. 1st Class Theanne Tangen)(RELEASED)



121107-A-CW157-013: The South Dakota National Guard 82nd Civil Support Team’s Maj. Dale Gadbois, operations officer, receives instruction from Wood Hover, site safety specialist at the Sanford Underground Research Facility, about where potential hazardous material is located in the education and research building during an emergency response training exercise at the Homestake Mine in Lead, S.D., Thursday, Nov. 15, 2012. (SDNG photo by Sgt. 1st Class Theanne Tangen)(RELEASED)



121107-A-CW157-015: Air Force Staff Sgt. Danny Oaks, member of the South Dakota National Guard 82nd Civil Support Team, searches for hazardous material during an emergency response training exercise at the Sanford Underground Research Facility at the Homestake Mine in Lead, S.D., Thursday, Nov. 15, 2012. (SDNG photo by Sgt. 1st Class Theanne Tangen)(RELEASED)

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