



1963 YEARS 2013

GERALD R. FORD
INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

Gerald R. Ford International Airport

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 8, 2014

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GFIA TO HOLD FULL-SCALE EMERGENCY EXERCISE

Grand Rapids, MI. – In accordance with Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) regulations, the Gerald R. Ford International Airport, in partnership with Lacks Enterprises, Inc. and the Kent County Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC), will be holding its tri-annual full-scale emergency exercise this month. The exercise is scheduled for Thursday, May 15, 2014 from 4-8pm at the Lacks Enterprises, Inc. plant located at 5675 Kraft Ave., Grand Rapids, Michigan. The purpose of the exercise is to test the emergency management system in a stress environment with actual deployment of resources to demonstrate coordination and response capabilities.

In addition to GFIA operations, airport police, and airport rescue and firefighting, participants will include Lacks Enterprises, Inc., the Kent County Emergency Management Team, the Red Cross, Salvation Army, Delta Air Lines, Davenport University and Cascade Township Fire Department along with multiple area supporting fire departments, EMS agencies and local hospitals. The Kent County Sheriff's Department will help control traffic. Temporary road closures will occur on Kraft Ave. between 60th Street to International Drive from 3:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m.

“The purpose of this exercise is to not only comply with the highest FAA standards in safety and security, but to also identify our strengths and weaknesses when it comes to responding and preparing for an emergency,” said GFIA Executive Director Brian Ryks.

“This exercise will not only further train our airport personnel in their roles and responsibilities, but it will give us a chance to collaborate with other local agencies. Communication and coordination amongst many agencies is crucial in real-time situations.”

Kent County Emergency Management relies on training exercises to find strengths and weaknesses in response.



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“Testing all of our systems on a regular basis helps keep us prepared,” said Jack Stewart, Emergency Management Coordinator for Kent County. “We applaud the staff at Gerald R. Ford International Airport, Lacks Enterprises, and the many other organizations that help make these exercises a success.”

In the past, emergency exercises have been held both off and on GFIA grounds. This year’s emergency exercise will simulate an off-airport aircraft incident and a Haz-Mat situation at Lacks Enterprises.

“Lacks Enterprises, Inc. is honored to host the Gerald R. Ford International Airport tri-annual full-scale emergency and we are looking forward to again collaborating with our local agencies and Davenport College,” said Lacks Enterprises, Inc. Executive Director of Human Resources Jim Green. “This exercise will also allow our internal Haz-Mat Team to train in a very unique situation; it will be a great experience for so many different sectors to come together and work as one.”

All media wishing to cover exercise preparations **must RSVP to Tara Hernandez by noon on Wednesday, May 14 with names and titles of those attending. Live shot requests must also be submitted by this date.**

Media will report to the Airport Viewing Area, situated on Kraft Ave. north of 52nd Street at 3:00 p.m. sharp, and will be escorted to the exercise site.

Please note: NO media access to the exercise area will be allowed after 3:00 p.m. in order to prepare for the drill. Media must remain on site from 4-6 p.m. as emergency vehicles will be using designated exit routes. Please dress accordingly as the exercise will take place on a muddy field.

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About GFIA

The Gerald R. Ford International Airport (GFIA) is the second busiest airport in Michigan. The airport served over 2.23 million passengers in 2013 and over 6,000 travelers pass through GFIA each day. The Gerald R. Ford International Airport offers non-stop service to 25 major market destinations with 124 daily non-stop flights. The Gerald R. Ford International Airport is managed and operated by the Kent County Department of Aeronautics. GFIA generates hundreds of millions of dollars annually in economic activity throughout West Michigan and employs over 1,500 people. For more information on GFIA visit: www.flyford.org or follow the airport on Twitter: @FlyGRFord.



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About Lacks Enterprises, Inc.

Lacks Enterprises, Inc. is a West Michigan based, fourth generation, family owned and privately held company. Since 1961, Lacks Enterprises, Inc. has been a leader at turning possibilities into reality. As the 4th largest private employer in West Michigan, Lacks boasts a diverse, engaged and highly-skilled workforce of close to 3,000 employees. We recognize that our employees are our most valuable asset and integral to our success as a leader in the industry. Our campus setting helps keep us focused on developing strong teams that are innovative, continuously improving, and excellent at serving our customers all the way from concept and design through production and distribution.



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