

DUTCHESS COUNTY HAZ MAT TEAM DISPATCHED TO ASSIST IN COLUMBIA COUNTY

Poughkeepsie... Dutchess County Emergency Response's Hazardous Materials Team has been dispatched to Columbia County to provide mutual aid to the Ghent Fire Department as it battles a massive chemical fire at the TCI of New York recycling company in Ghent.

Dutchess County Executive Marcus J. Molinaro directed County Emergency Response Coordinator Dana Smith to reach out this morning to the Chair of the Columbia County Board of Supervisors, Town of West Ghent Supervisor and the Columbia County Emergency Management Office to see if Dutchess County could provide support to them in any way.

"Dutchess stands ready to assist our neighbors in Columbia County," said County Executive Molinaro. "Emergency first responders are facing a very difficult situation battling this blaze and numerous individuals have been impacted. We are prepared to provide whatever assistance we can to help ensure the safety of the first responders and residents."

According to Emergency Response Coordinator Dana Smith, a mutual aid request for the DC Hazardous Materials (HazMat) team to assist the Ghent Fire Department with decontamination was received at 12:49pm today and the County's HazMat vehicle with four volunteers has been sent to Columbia County. They will be providing decontamination to personnel who have been in contact or close proximity of the building or contents of building. Additional HazMat team members are available to respond if needed. Decontamination is the physical or chemical process of reducing and preventing the spread of contaminants from persons and equipment at a HazMat incident.

The Dutchess County Hazardous Materials Division consists of 22 volunteers, who are on call 24 hours a day to respond to and assist in coordinating and managing incidents when hazardous materials are suspected to be involved. This skilled, volunteer team meets monthly for training and meets all Public Employee Safety & Health (PESH) and Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) requirements and responds within the Hudson Valley region as well as Dutchess County.