



State of New Mexico

Office of the Governor

Bill Richardson
Governor

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Governor Bill Richardson Talks With Texas Governor Perry Offers Help and Prayers on behalf of all New Mexicans to our Texas Neighbors

SANTA FE - New Mexico Governor Bill Richardson spoke today by phone with Texas Governor Perry. "I spoke with Governor Perry and offered help. Our hearts and prayers go out to everyone in Texas and Louisiana facing danger from Hurricane Rita. We will do whatever we can to help our good friends and neighbors in Texas in their time of need," Governor Richardson said.

Governor Richardson authorized the deployment at FEMA's request of the New Mexico Urban Search and Rescue Team early Thursday morning to Texas. New Mexico Task Force 1 is a FEMA sponsored team of 70 highly trained rescue personnel. They are volunteers from fire departments, doctors and nurses, engineers and communication specialists, swift water rescue and canine search experts who are deployed to events of mass destruction like hurricanes, earthquakes and acts of terrorism. The team has just returned from New Orleans and the aftermath of hurricane Katrina. They were also deployed to the Pentagon following the attacks on September 11th, 2001.

Today, the National Guard Bureau activated the 64th Civil Support Team consisting of 22 members of the New Mexico National Guard to San Antonio, Texas. The Civil Support Team provides a well-trained assessment to support the State response as a lead element for the National Guard. Their knowledge of the emergency management system, expertise in emergency response operations and technical capabilities may provide tremendous assistance to the local Incident Commander. The Civil Support Teams provide assessment of the damage, consultation on logistics, medical, chemical and biological defense. The unit is made up of 22 full-time National Guard members. It consists of six sections: command, operations, communications, administration/logistics, medical and survey, who have been specially trained and equipped to provide a technical reach-back capability to other experts. It provides unique military capabilities, expertise and technologies to assist State Governors.

The New Mexico National Guard is providing their assistance around the country and around the world. Since September 3, Governor Richardson has had New Mexico National Guard Task Force Plaquemines (formerly Task Force 515) aiding the victims and providing outstanding support to the Hurricane Katrina relief efforts. Currently 200 New Mexico National Guard members are serving with Task Force Plaquemines Forward 2 in Louisiana in addition to the 700 soldiers supporting Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom.