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Riverside County successfully completes statewide emergency drill

Riverside County health officials successfully concluded a week-long, statewide emergency response drill on Friday, Nov. 20.

“We are very happy with the way so many agencies came together this week to challenge and assess their ability to address a health emergency,” said Kim Saruwatari, Director of Riverside County Emergency Management Department.

The emergency drill tested the protocols and procedures of public health, environmental health, fire, law enforcement and emergency responders throughout Southern California to respond to an Anthrax attack.

The exercise included the activation of medical points of dispensing, or PODs. From these POD locations, officials practiced a swift and organized distribution of life-saving medications that would be required following the release of hazardous material into the environment in a real-life event.

Numerous county agencies across Southern California participated and trained together for the drill over the course of two years.

“Our residents should feel reassured that hundreds of Riverside County’s public health professionals and first responders have and will always collaborate to ensure the best health and safety of all,” said Susan Harrington, Riverside County Public Health Director.

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Photos attached:

Idyllwild POD (caption): Residents, young and old, took part in the medicine distribution exercise in Idyllwild, CA on Thursday, Nov. 19. (Courtesy: County of Riverside Department of Public Health)

HAZMAT (caption): HAZMAT crews investigate a suspicious substance as part of the statewide emergency drill that took place Nov. 16-20, 2015 in Riverside County. (Courtesy: County of Riverside Department of Public Health)

Warehouse (caption): Medicines arrive at a warehouse for distribution at POD locations set up throughout Riverside County as part of the statewide emergency drill that took place Nov. 16-20, 2015. (Courtesy: County of Riverside Department of Public Health)