
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

All-hazards incident mitigated by TCHC staff

WADENA, Minn. – May. 30, 2022 – On May 30, 2022, Tri-County Health Care staff responded to an all-hazards incident involving a fire at a nearby irrigation facility and incoming severe weather. Staff were warned of the fire and the possibility of chemical gas approaching the hospital and clinic. Additionally, the severe weather approaching the City of Wadena was producing high winds, heavy rain, hail and the possibility of tornados.

At approximately 3:00 p.m., EMS staff were dispatched to assist with the nearby fire. EMS promptly setup operations and began fire rehab, a procedure where EMS supports fire fighters by provide first aide, hydration, and a cool place to recover from fighting the blaze. In the midst of operations, the storm hit prompting all EMS staff to take cover.

At the Wadena Hospital, incident command operations were initiated with Teresa Johnson, chief human resources officer, assuming the role of incident commander. She along with several members of administration, EMS, and medical staff evacuated patients to designated safe areas within the facility. This process was completed without issue

Due to the threat of chemical gas entering the facility, Emergency maintenance procedures were also initiated. Maintenance and the engineer on call quickly disabled the ventilation system to stop the spread of gas. This process was completed without incident and all observations indicate that chemical laced gas did not enter the facility.

“You couldn’t write a scenario like this,” remarked Emergency Management Coordinator Tom Krueger. Krueger is responsible for the mobilization of incident command at Tri-County Health Care. He’s also responsible for training staff to handle scenarios like severe weather and structure fires. Leading up the storm, Krueger was providing detailed information on its movement. His team was instrumental in facilitating evacuation during the crisis. “Everyone did a fantastic job and everything went according to plan even with the mounting problems in the region”, explained Krueger.

Shortly after the storm passed, staff received an all-clear message. Evacuation orders were lifted and patients were brought back to their rooms. Once the threat of gas was dismissed, the ventilation system was reactivated and normal operations resumed.

ABOUT TRI-COUNTY HEALTH CARE

Tri-County Health Care is a private, not-for-profit health care system based in Wadena, Minnesota. It offers care services such as primary health, surgery, cancer care, diagnostic imaging, obstetrics, orthopedics and rehabilitation. Tri-County Health Care operates a



is becoming **Astera Health**

Michael Denny, Content Strategist

415 Jefferson St. N. • Wadena, MN 56482

PHONE: 218-632-8181 EMAIL: michael.denny@tchc.org

TCHC.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

hospital and medical clinic in Wadena, and serves the counties of Wadena, Todd and Otter Tail through five satellite clinics and two physical therapy clinics in Bertha, Henning, Ottertail, Sebeka and Verndale. Visit TCHC.org.

###