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Fort Custer Will House New Weapons of Mass Destruction Civil Support Team

December 12, 2001 — State Senator John J.H. Schwarz, M.D. (R-Battle Creek) today announced that Fort Custer, near Battle Creek, will be the location for Michigan's new Weapons of Mass Destruction Civil Support Team (WMD CST).

"The 51st WMD CST will be one of America's most sophisticated military response units," said Senator Schwarz. "This team will be available to help our citizens in the event of a suspected bio-terrorist incident. Fort Custer, with its facilities for training and support, and its proximity to the Battle Creek Air National Guard Base, is an ideal place to locate the Weapons of Mass Destruction Civil Support Team."

The 51st WMD CST is designed to augment local and regional terrorism response capabilities. They will be trained to respond to events known, or suspected, to involve Weapons of Mass Destruction, such as the use of chemical agents (nerve or blister agents, or sarin, for example) biological agents (anthrax or Ebola, for example), or radiological agents. The team uses special military and commercial detection and communications equipment and is trained for WMD response.

(More)

The full-time, 22-member team is comprised of specialists in Command, Operations, Survey, Medical, Communications and Logistics. Each team member completes over 650 hours of technical training conducted by agencies including the Michigan State Police HAZMAT Training Center, Department of Defense, Department of Energy, and EPA.

Training for the 51st WMD CST is scheduled to begin in January 2002 and will be completed in spring 2003.

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