



Lake County Illinois

Legislation Text

File #: 19-0846, Version: 1

Special recognition of the individuals who responded to the May 3, 2019 explosion in Waukegan.

SPECIAL RECOGNITION

WHEREAS, at approximately 9:30 p.m. on Friday, May 3, 2019; emergency personnel from the City of Waukegan responded to a call regarding an explosion at a silicone plant in Waukegan, Illinois; and

WHEREAS, the explosion at the plant was so severe, it was instantly felt and heard by residents throughout Lake County and caused damage to at least five other nearby buildings; and

WHEREAS, the Waukegan Police Department and the Waukegan Fire Department immediately responded to the incident and worked tirelessly to secure the perimeter, give aid to the injured, and put out the flames from the blast; and

WHEREAS, recognizing the need for additional emergency personnel support, the City of Waukegan reached out to its neighboring communities and Lake County to obtain further crisis assistance; and

WHEREAS, numerous other fire departments, HAZMAT, and structural collapse response teams provided help through the Mutual Aid Box Alarm System; and

WHEREAS, the Lake County Emergency Management Agency, the Lake County Coroner's Office, the Lake County Health Department, and the Lake County Sheriff's Office and its divisions, including deputies, the auxiliary unit, and the 911 Communications Center, all acted quickly to support the first responders and to caution the residents in the surrounding area; and

WHEREAS, the Lake County Division of Transportation offered additional equipment and resources, such as barricades, detour support, and road sweepers; and Lake County PASSAGE was promptly updated to inform motorists of road closures in the area; and

WHEREAS, there were nine employees working in the building at the time of the explosion. Three victims were treated at area hospitals, while four others were reported dead. The deceased include Byron Biehn, Daniel Nicklas, Allen E. Stevens Jr., and Jeff Cummings, who is said to have escorted many people out of the building before he went back inside to help the remaining employees; and

WHEREAS, the explosion has been ruled an accident; however, the Waukegan Police Department, the Waukegan Fire Department, the Lake County Coroner's Office, the Office of the State Fire Marshal, and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration are working in collaboration as the investigation is ongoing; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RECOGNIZED, that the Lake County Board first extends its heartfelt sympathy to the victims and their families of this devastating tragedy; and

BE IT FURTHER RECOGNIZED, the Lake County Board does hereby recognize all communities who supported the City of Waukegan in this time of need, and extends its sincerest appreciation and gratitude for the leadership, support, and heroism of all emergency personnel who responded to the silicone plant explosion.

DATED, at Waukegan, LAKE COUNTY, ILLINOIS, on May 14, 2019.