



**NEWS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

St. James Parish Hospital & Noranda Alumina Join Forces during Successful Disaster Drill

Lutcher, LA—January 17, 2011— Emergency Preparedness, the discipline of handling and avoiding risk, is a priority for local entities St. James Parish Hospital and Noranda Alumina. Both organizations recognize that sudden disasters can happen regardless of exceptional team training and understand that the ability to successfully handle these situations instantaneously is a task that must be regularly practiced and evaluated. Therefore, St. James Parish Hospital and Noranda Alumina recently teamed up for an unannounced, hazmat emergency preparedness drill.

The disaster drill was performed on December 29 under the direction of Jeremy Martin, Director of Support Services at St. James Parish Hospital in Lutcher and Chris Markerson, Environmental Health and Safety Manager at Noranda Alumina (formally Kaiser Aluminum) in Gramercy. This particular drill involving a pseudo-patient contaminated with caustic or sodium hydroxide, an industrial chemical that is capable of severely burning the skin, was carried out to evaluate the response time and tools necessary to adequately respond to a chemical explosion.

Noranda Alumina began the drill with a site-wide alarm which alerted all employees to report to a designated “shelter-in-place” area where headcounts were performed and information was relayed to the site’s Incident Commander. The plant then began a simulation of decontaminating a patient, diverging from the customary process to complete sanitization before transport, under the assumption that the patient was unconscious in order to allow hospital procedures to be practiced. The emergency room was then contacted, briefed and Noranda Alumina’s Emergency Response Team transported the patient to the hospital.

After receiving notification of the incident, hospital staff immediately conducted a code orange overhead page. Within minutes of the alert, the Decontamination Team consisting of staff members from maintenance, respiratory and the emergency room was assembled, properly protected and waiting outdoors. The team was responsible for constructing a large decontamination tent which is connected to a hose and reservoir to contain hazardous matter. Upon arrival of the patient, the team performed the decontamination process, properly disposed of contaminated clothing and personal protective equipment and admitted the sanitized patient to the emergency room. Under the direction of the Administrator on Call and several Executive Team Members, the patient then underwent necessary medical tests completing the second and final phase of the drill.

Martin, Director of Support Services at St. James Parish Hospital, was extremely pleased with the outcome of the drill. “Our staff worked exceptionally well as a team and responded very quickly to the incident even amidst spontaneous hospital occurrences,” said Martin who was referring to an unplanned variable during the drill involving an emergency room patient that required several staff members to abandon the exercise.

In addition, both Martin and Markerson stressed the importance of practice and partnerships in relation to optimal emergency preparedness. “At Noranda, we believe the best opportunities to establish preparedness is to practice through routine drills where we can learn from our simulated experiences. We also value the community in which we operate and we appreciate the opportunity to work with St. James Parish Hospital, which is a great asset to Noranda Alumina and the community of St. James Parish,” said Markerson, EHS Manager at Noranda Alumina.

St. James Parish Hospital is a new state-of-the-art, full-service facility providing excellent and compassionate healthcare to the community since 1955. Noranda Alumina is a modernized alumina manufacturing facility along the Mississippi River with an annual production capacity of 1.2 million metric tons of alumina.

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