

CAP aids tornado-devastated Kansas communities

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NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS -- In the wake of tornadoes that tore apart one Kansas town May 4 and touched down in dozens of other parts of the state, the Kansas Wing flew damage assessment missions using CAP's advanced satellite-transmitted digital imaging system technology, launched aircraft to search for distressed motorists and residents and supported communication needs across several counties, volunteering more than 300 hours to the disaster relief effort.

A Kansas Wing photograph taken above Greensburg, Kan., shows some of the damage resulting from a tornado packing 205 mph winds that destroyed most of the town May 4. CAP members in aircraft and on ground teams volunteered more than 300 hours to help their communities in the aftermath of the deadly twister. Aircrews employ advanced technology to photograph damage, search for victims May 09, 2007

At the request of the Kansas Department of Emergency Management, CAP aircrews in four Cessna aircraft flew along tornado paths for 20 hours to report areas of severe damage to CAP's ground search and rescue teams, to send digital photos of damage to the state's Emergency Operations Center and to call in requests for emergency medical assistance. CAP ground teams also served an additional 40 hours. Maj. Dennis Pearson, incident commander at Kansas Wing Headquarters, said four ground teams were deployed in CAP vans to assist with regional communications. In addition, members volunteered more than 240 hours at wing headquarters, manning radios to coordinate communications among air, ground and command staff as well as other agencies, such as the Kansas Air National Guard. Members there also worked on flight lines, directing and parking aircraft. More than 45 wing members took part in the combined effort. Maj. Gen. Antonio J. Pineda, CAP national commander, applauded the effort: "The work our volunteers performed in Kansas exemplifies the dedication and love of country of CAP members across America who help their communities in times of peace but especially during crises. It also highlights the capabilities of CAP to use advanced technology like satellite-transmitted digital imaging to take airborne photography of damaged areas and immediately send these via e-mail to emergency managers."