



Canaan Valley Ski Area Hosts Disaster Simulation

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Canaan Valley Resort Ski Area was the sight of a long-planned training event on Sunday hosted by Canaan Valley Volunteer Fire Department.

Training scenarios better prepare first responders for the flux of events in a real-life situation. Scenarios require communication, coordination, and resources from multiple agencies and locations.

"This is just a general preparatory measure, a very rare scenario but one that would be challenging to local responders and just a practice makes perfect situation, an opportunity for them to come together in a safe learning environment, test out plans and procedures, and identify areas where they can make improvements before something actually would happen," said JH Consulting Owner Jeff Harvey.

This training scenario involved a malfunction of one of the lifts at the two ski areas. This incident would result in a large number of people needing assistance. Evacuating the lift, preparing on-site medical attention, and hospital transportation are essential parts of the training exercise.

Triage stations were set up by the level of severity. Participants that didn't need to be seen right away were in the green and participants that had broken limbs and spinal injuries were in the red and were being seen immediately. As people flooded in they were being attended by medical experts as well as first responders to make sure they were getting the best possible medical attention.

"If this happens we all need to be able to coordinate to be able to make this go as smoothly as possible and as quickly as possible so that we can save the maximum number of lives, use the minimum amount of resources and hopefully have a more positive outcome than what it could be if we didn't have the training," said Paramedic Firefighter Janette Basile.

Sunday's training involved both a fire and lift failure for a multiple opportunity training and finished with a group discussion on how to improve in the future.

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