



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Update: More Lakeland Firefighters Sent to Relieve USAR Team 421 Members in Panhandle and Continue Helping in Hurricane Michael Aftermath**

#### **Lakeland USAR Team 421 Helping in Hurricane Michael Aftermath Since Oct.10**

#### **October 17, 2018:**

Lakeland, FL – Six Lakeland Fire Department (LFD) Urban Search and Rescue Team (USAR) Technical Rescue Team 421 (TRT 421) members have been deployed in the Florida panhandle since October 10, 2018 assisting in the aftermath of Hurricane Michael. They have been working every day since deployed, on 12-hour shift rotations. They have assisted in the panhandle with search and rescue operations and serving as the responding fire department in towns like Mexico Beach due to the town's regular fire department being non-operational with no available responders.

Six additional members from the LFD TRT 421 team left Lakeland at approximately 6:30 AM Wednesday, October 17, 2018 to relieve the afore mentioned rescuers of their duties and allow them to return to Lakeland to rest and recover. Once the new team members arrive they will relieve the original team members of their duties and those first responders will be able to return home. They are anticipated to arrive back in Lakeland, at Fire Station 1 located at 701 E Main Street at approximately 9:30 PM on Wednesday, October 17, 2018.

The department's USAR Coordinator and Training Captain, Matt Brown, has been sent to Tallahassee to help at the State of Florida's Emergency Operations Center on the Gold Incident Management Team (IMT) as the Division Group Leader for the Engine Strike Teams, Technical Rescue, and Ambulance Strike Teams.

Photos of the team and the work they are doing are available at [www.facebook.com/LakelandFD](https://www.facebook.com/LakelandFD) > Photos > USAR Team 421 Helping in Hurricane Michael Aftermath.





## October 15, 2018:

Lakeland, FL – Six members from the Lakeland Fire Department's (LFD) Urban Search and Rescue Team (USAR) Technical Rescue Team 421 (TRT 421) deployed on Wednesday, October 10 to the Florida panhandle, to provide rescue and relief assistance in the wake of Hurricane Michael.

The team was deployed as part of Florida Strike Team 602, based out of Sarasota County. They were first deployed to Panama City, FL where they carried out several search missions for victims and answered emergency calls, including several gas leaks and fires.

The team has since deployed to Mexico Beach, FL where they arrived Saturday, October 13. Mexico Beach is where Hurricane Michael made direct landfall and has caused catastrophic damage. The LFD team is currently in Mexico Beach and serving along with other firefighters from other parts of the state as the area's emergency responders for general emergency calls, due to the fact that the town's regular fire department is non-operational and has no available responders. LFD TRT 421 team members are also assisting task forces in the area in performing search and rescue operations.

The team is anticipated to continue this work through the rest of the week. The LFD team members are safe and in good spirits. The team deployed with Lakeland Fire Department apparatus Heavy Rescue 73 and USAR Truck 421.

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