Civil Air Patrol
U.S. Air Force Auxiliary

IOWA WING

Wing Mounts Rapid Response to Derecho Damage

After a derecho storm with winds topping 120 mph suddenly swept through central and eastern Iowa on Aug. 10, 2020, the Iowa Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management needed an aerial survey of the damage, and it needed it quickly. The next morning, 10 Civil Air Patrol planes from the Iowa, Illinois and Kansas wings were on the ground at the Eastern Iowa Airport preparing to photograph 725 square miles of Linn County, plus 10 additional towns and cities.

Over the next 23 hours, these volunteer aircrews flew 37 sorties and gathered more than 4,500 photographs of derecho damage in the Hawkeye State. Their quick response helped the state secure a presidential disaster declaration for the area.

On the ground, CAP members ventured into neighborhoods to help with storm cleanup. Others delivered ice, food, water, generators and other support to residents in their areas. Many members' own homes suffered damage.

The Iowa Wing couldn't have met its mission mandate without help from neighboring CAP wings, said Col. Jonathan Lartigue, wing commander. "It's wonderful that we are able to call on our neighboring wings when we need assistance to operate together as one unified Civil Air Patrol to meet the needs of our customers," he said.

Maj. Gen. Mark Smith, CAP national commander, praised the rapid response. In a note to Lartigue, Smith wrote: "My compliments to you, your team and members from adjacent wings who came to help in such an outstanding manner during difficult circumstances."

An Iowa Wing aerial photo shows destruction to silos and other farm structures – a typical scene of the devastation that a derecho wreaked Aug. 10-11 in Iowa.

Iowa Wing 2020 Statistics

Volunteer Members
132 adult members
105 cadets
16 aircrew personnel
156 emergency responders

Squadrons
11 locations statewide

Aircraft
4 single engine

Vehicles
14 vehicles

Interoperable Communications
11 VHF/FM repeaters
111 VHF/FM stations
18 HF stations

Missions
1 search and rescue mission
1 find*
* Includes find credited with national team support
1 disaster relief mission
2 CAP, AFROTC and AFJROTC cadet orientation flight missions
2 other Air Force support missions
7 training missions
2 other state support missions

Significant Events Supported in Fiscal Year 2020
Linn County photo recon

COVID-19 Mission Support
Distributing food and critical supplies

Cadet Flying
142 CAP, AFROTC and AFJROTC cadet orientation flights

Total Hours Flown
351

Financial
$700,749 value of wing's volunteer hours

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DID YOU KNOW?

- ✔ The Iowa Wing doesn't receive funding from the state of Iowa but contributes greatly to its communities.
- ✔ The wing was the fastest-growing wing in CAP in the past year.
- ✔ The wing received a new Cessna C-172 G1000 NXi plane in August.