



Saving Lives When Disaster Strikes

One of the greatest safety issues Emergency Responders face during night time disaster events (real or simulated) that can be easily corrected is accountability. One of those main components is the ability to see and identify individuals during stressful rescue situations.

During a recent training event we exposed participants to challenging visual rescue scenarios utilizing limited lighting and smoke. Rescuers were comprised of both Federal and State Urban Search and Rescue responders working in three separate squads. *Triagelights* were issued to each squad member who was instructed to illuminate a different color (Red, Blue, or Yellow). The instructor cadre was equipped with the same lights but used the multi-color rotating feature.

We observed a dramatic increase in participant accountability with visual location confirmation. The patient collection point was clearly marked with the same lighting system helping the night exercise to be a complete success. Adjustments can be offered by using a different helmet attachment (clips) instead of the present lanyards. Even though our participants engaged in confined space rescues through concrete rubble, no damage was noted to any of the *Triagelights*.

Clearly, as Safety Officer for the event I can say that the *Triagelights* system allowed me to place eyes on any one or all three of the squads during the entire event. I felt a great increase to our safety plan and provided a form of security concerning accountability. The students stated the lighting accountability system provided a sense of comfort for their squad with-in the dark confined spaces.

Please take a moment to view the Night Exercise video provided by ABC Affiliate WALB News 10 at:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CbB7Lzc6ZfY>

Training event: FEMA Medical Specialist course at the Guardian Centers of Georgia, Oct. 21-24, 2013.

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