

**Press Release - KIRKLAND, WA  
June 1, 2011**

Considered the deadliest tornado in the U.S. since record keeping began in 1950, the EF-5 with 200 mph winds killed over 130 persons and injured more than 900. About one-third of the town of Joplin remains in complete ruins, with the preliminary damage report showing approximately 7,000 homes destroyed, hundreds more damaged, and a total affected population of over 12,000 persons. Included in the destruction was the complete loss of the 7-story St. John's Mercy Hospital, one of the city's two major hospitals.

Within hours after the storm passed on the Sunday evening of May 22nd, the Missouri Disaster Medical Assistance Team (DMAT) responded to the Joplin disaster. By Wednesday of the following week a plan had been formed for quickly re-establishing St. John's medical treatment capability by deploying the Missouri DMAT's 8,000 square foot mobile field hospital. The portable facility, manufactured by BLU-MED Response Systems®, had been recently deployed for the 2011 National Level Exercise and was still set up in the nearby town of Branson. With the help of National Guard soldiers of the 117th Engineer Team, the facility was dismantled and packed within 4 hours for transport to Joplin. The 60-bed mobile hospital was then erected within 15 hours by the combined efforts of the Guard, Missouri DMAT, and BLU-MED's disaster response team.

St. John's medical staff started seeing patients again on May 29, 2011 in the BLU-MED Response Systems facility. "Six days after the event, we're up and running," said Dr. Robert Dodson, surgeon and president of the medical staff at St. John's. "This hospital will allow us to do everything we could do within St. John's, only on a smaller scale." YouTube video provided by Mercy (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pF6x6jl-kF8>).

St. John's new mobile hospital is designed to withstand 100 mph winds and has the durability to provide service for 10 years or more. However, it is anticipated that the hospital will be moved to a more permanent structure within 6 months and eventually a new hospital will be built.



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Alaska Structures (AKS) designs, engineers and delivers the highest quality fabric building systems for extreme environments. Since it was founded in 1975, over 50,000 AKS shelters have been tested and proven in over 50 countries around the world, including more than 30,000 Alaska Military Shelters and 15,000 Alaska Environmental Control Units in Afghanistan and Iraq. For more information, visit [www.AlaskaStructures.com](http://www.AlaskaStructures.com)

**Contact: Don Diesel, President, (314) 565-8248**