On April 27, 2014, severe thunderstorms in Arkansas, Kansas, and Oklahoma produced heavy rain, large hail, damaging winds, and tornadoes. One of the tornadoes, a ½ mile wide EF-4 funnel, impacted the small town of Vilonia, Arkansas, population 3,815. The local fire department in the area identified the event as a mass causality incident, with the entire town being impacted.

TX-TF1 received activation orders from FEMA for a Type-I US&R Task Force on April 28, at 12:15 a.m. In addition, the FEMA US&R White IST and the FEMA IST Central Cache was activated, with 1 other task force being placed on alert.

This deployment was a unique situation for TX-TF1 as they were still engaged in their ORE in College Station, Texas, when they were activated. They deployed a Type-I US&R Task Force, the FEMA US&R IST Cache, and support personnel for the IST soon after the activation notice to Vilonia, Arkansas.

The Type-I US&R Task Force staged at the Little Rock Air Force base, ready to assist the locals at a moment’s notice. TX-TF1, the White IST, and the Central Cache were demobilized on April 30, 2014 at 8:30 a.m. after their assistance was no longer needed.