



What is CERT and Why Is There a Need?

Each year, many communities are rocked by severe weather, such as hurricanes, tornadoes, floods or by "man made" disasters. The damage caused by such disasters effect everyone. Disasters:

- Can severely restrict and overwhelm emergency response resources, communications, transportation and utilities; and
- Can leave individuals and neighborhoods cut off from outside emergency support.

What would you do ?

People will have to learn to rely on each other for help in order to meet their immediate life saving and life sustaining needs.

The CERT course will benefit any citizen who takes it. This individual will be better prepared to respond to and cope with the aftermath of a disaster. Additionally, if a community wants to supplement its response capability after a disaster, civilians can be recruited and trained as neighborhood, business, and government teams that, in essence, will be auxiliary responders. These groups can provide immediate assistance to victims in their area, organize spontaneous volunteers who have not had the training, and collect disaster intelligence that will assist professional responders with prioritization and allocation of resources following a disaster.

What Does the Course Involve?

The CERT course is delivered in the community by a team of first responders who have the requisite knowledge and skills to instruct the sessions. It is suggested that the instructors complete a CERT Train-the-Trainer (TTT) conducted by their State Training Office for Emergency Management or the Emergency Management Institute in order to learn the training techniques that are used .

The CERT training for community groups is usually delivered in 2 1/2 hour sessions, one evening a week over a 7 week period. The training consists of the following:

- **Session I, DISASTER PREPAREDNESS:**
Introductions to disasters, impact of disasters on infrastructure, the role of CERTs in disaster response.
- **Session II, DISASTER FIRE SUPPRESSION:**
Identifying and reducing potential fire hazards, basic fire suppression strategy, resources, and techniques.
- **Session III, DISASTER MEDICAL OPERATIONS PART I:** Participants practice diagnosing and treating airway obstruction, bleeding, and shock by using simple triage and rapid treatment techniques.
- **Session IV, DISASTER MEDICAL OPERATIONS, PART II:** Covers evaluating patients by doing a head to toe assessment, establishing a medical treatment area, performing basic first aid, and practicing in a safe and sanitary manner.
- **Session V, LIGHT SEARCH AND RESCUE OPERATIONS:** Participants learn about search and rescue planning, size-up, search techniques, rescue techniques, and most important, rescuer safety.
- **Session VI, PRE-STORM CERT OPERATIONS:** Protecting your home from severe weather, personal readiness, CERT equipment, organizing your team.
- **Session VII, POST-STORM CERT OPERATIONS:** Participants review their answers from a take home examination. Finally, they practice the skills that they have learned during the previous six sessions in disaster activity.

The Objectives of the Course

Upon completions of the CERT training, the participants will be able to:

1. Describe the types of hazards most likely to affect their homes and communities.
2. Describe the function of CERT and their roles in immediate response.
3. Take steps to prepare themselves for a disaster.
4. Identify and reduce potential fire hazards in their homes and workplaces.
5. Work as a team to apply basic fire suppression strategies, resources, and safety measures to extinguish a burning liquid.
6. Apply techniques for opening airways, control bleeding, and treating shock.
7. Conduct triage under simulated conditions.
8. Perform head-to-toe assessments.
9. Select and set up a treatment area.
10. Employ basic treatment for various types of wounds.
11. Identify planning and size-up requirements for potential search and rescue situations.
12. Describe the most common techniques for searching a structure.
13. Use safe techniques for debris removal and victim extrication.
14. Describe ways to protect rescuers during search and rescue.

How Do You Get Involved?

First - Recruit participants from within your own community including neighborhood, schools and businesses. Some "natural" groups that participate are:

Community Groups -

Homeowners' associations, neighborhood watch groups, religious groups, and similar organizations, geographically distributed with the local area.

Business and Industry -

Possible locations include high rise office buildings, large hotels, and industrial complexes.

Schools -

PTSA organizations and faculty groups.

Local Government -

Local Government employees who are trained in CERT procedures can help local government agencies continue to provide needed services to citizens during an emergency.

Second - Select a meeting place that can accommodate your group. Try to find a location that will allow the group to meet the same night for 7 weeks. Try to schedule the times to allow for two and one-half hours per session.

Third - Call your local emergency management office to request your classes and obtain information on the materials that will be needed.

For More Information Contact

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