

# Disaster Preparedness



CERT Basic Training  
And CERT Teams

# What is CERT?

The Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Program educates people about disaster preparedness and gives them some training to better assist their family and friends in an emergency.

It trains them in basic disaster response skills, such as fire safety, light search and rescue, disaster medical operations and disaster psychology.

# How can CERT's Assist?

CERT members can assist others in their neighborhood or workplace following an event when professional responders are not immediately available to help.

CERT members can also support emergency response agencies by taking an active role in emergency preparedness training projects and disaster response in their community.

# CERT History

- 1985 - Mexico City earthquake response examined by City of Los Angeles. Over 100 volunteers killed aiding victims
- 1986 - Los Angeles Fire Department pilot program to train citizens for emergency response
- 1987 - Whittier Narrows Earthquake – Pilot program expanded to include entire fire department
- 1993 - FEMA expanded program to other types of disasters and offered the program nationally
- Program currently offered in all 50 states, three territories and six other countries.

# Emergency Response in Disaster

- Police: address incidences of grave public safety
- Firefighters: suppress major fires
- EMS personnel: handle life-threatening injuries
- Lower priority needs met in other ways
- CERT can be a force multiplier assisting, but not replacing, professional services.

# CERT Disaster Response

- CERT members' first responsibility is personal and family safety
- Assist emergency response personnel when requested
- CERT team members do NOT deploy unless requested
- Respond after a disaster:
  - Treat injuries
  - Extinguish small fires
  - Locate and turn off utilities, if safe
  - Conduct light search and rescue
  - Help to relieve survivor stress





# Levels of CERT Membership

- Level 1 – Receives basic training for personal emergency readiness
- Level 2 – Receives basic training and attends additional training when offered
- Level 3 – Receives basic training and joins an organized CERT Team for additional training, exercises and functions

# Course Curriculum

- Disaster Preparedness (2.5 hours)
- Fire safety (2.5 hours)
- Disaster medical operations (5.5 hours)
- Light search and rescue (2.5 hours)
- Disaster psychology (1 hour)
- CERT and terrorism (2.5 hours)
- CERT Organization (1.75 hours)
- Final Review and Simulation (2.5 hours)



# Additional Training for CERTs

- Advanced first aid
- Animal issues in disasters
- Automated External Defibrillator (AED) use
- Community relations
- CPR skills
- Debris removal
- Emergency Communications
- Donations and distribution management
- Shelter management
- Special needs concerns
- Traffic/crowd control
- Volunteer management

# Basic Personal Protective Equipment

- Helmet
- Goggles
- N95 Mask
- Gloves (work and non-latex)
- Backpack
- Work Boots



# Protection for Disaster Service Workers

- CERT members generally protected by:
  - “Good Samaritan” laws
  - Volunteer Protection Act of 1997
  - State disaster service worker and workman’s compensation laws



# Non-Disaster Roles

- Identify and aid neighbors/co-workers who might need assistance (Mapping)
- Distribute emergency preparedness materials
- Safety demonstrations
- Staff first aid booths at special events
- Parade and event route management





# About the Training

- The program is presented free of charge
- All course materials are provided by OES
- The course is 21 hours of instruction
- The course schedule is flexible
- We need a local training facility for the presentation

# Conclusion



CERT members are trained to assist their family and neighbors in emergencies. They can also help to prepare their neighbors for disasters.

CERT Team members can assist the local community and emergency services by supplementing them and by performing duties that support the emergency services. This can free trained personnel to perform their functions.