



Disaster Preparedness

CERT Basic Training
And CERT Teams



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citizen  *corps*

What is CERT?

The Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Program educates people about disaster preparedness for hazards that may impact their area. It trains them in basic disaster response skills, such as fire safety, light search and rescue, disaster medical operations and disaster psychology.



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How can CERT's Assist?

Using the training learned in the classroom and during exercises, 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 in their community.



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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.



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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.



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CERT Disaster Response

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



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CERT in Action



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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



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Course Curriculum

- Fire safety
- Disaster medical operations
- Light search and rescue
- Disaster psychology
- CERT and terrorism
- CERT Organization



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Additional Training for CERTs

- Advanced first aid
- Animal issues in disasters
- Automated External Defibrillator (AED) use
- Community relations
- CPR skills
- Debris removal
- Donations management
- Shelter management
- Special needs concerns
- Traffic/crowd control
- Utilities control
- Online courses



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Personal Protective Equipment

- Helmet
- Goggles
- N95 Mask
- Gloves (work and non-latex)
- Sturdy shoes or work boots



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Protection for Disaster Workers

- CERT members generally protected by:
 - “Good Samaritan” laws
 - Volunteer Protection Act of 1997
 - Relevant State statutes



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Non-Disaster Roles

- Identify and aid neighbors/co-workers who might need assistance
- Distribute preparedness materials; do demos
- Staff first aid booths at special events
- Parade route management



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Home and Workplace Preparedness



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CERT Basic Training
Unit 1: Disaster Preparedness

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Develop a Disaster Plan

- Do you have a written plan?
- If you have to evacuate, what will you take from your house?
- Where will you meet other family members?
- Who is your out-of-State “check-in” contact?
- Do you have transportation?
- What route (and several alternates) will you use to evacuate your neighborhood?
- Did you remember your pets in your plan?
- Does your family know your plan?
- Did you practice your plan?



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Conclusion

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

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.



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