

What is CERT, and Why Is There a Need?

Each year, many North Carolina communities are rocked by severe weather such as hurricanes, tornadoes, floods or flash floods, winter storms or “man made” disasters.

The damage caused by such disasters affects 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 If This Happened to You?

Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT) are trained to take care of themselves and then help others in their communities for the first three days following a disaster. This is when debris-clogged or damaged roads, disrupted communications or a high volume of calls may prevent access by emergency response personnel.

The training covers basic skills that are important to know in a disaster when emergency services are not available. With training and practice and by working as a team, you will be able to do the greatest good for the greatest number of people after a disaster, while protecting yourself from

What Does the Course Involve?

becoming a victim.

The Community Emergency Response Team course consists of 21-25 hours of hands-on training. Classes are taught by emergency responders, including firefighters, emergency medical and law enforcement personnel, from your community.

The course agenda includes:

- Unit 1 EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS
Introduction to disasters, impact of disasters on infrastructures, the role of CERTs in disaster response.
- Unit 2 FIRE SAFETY
Identifying and reducing potential fire hazards, basic fire suppression strategy, resources and techniques.
- Unit 3 EMERGENCY MEDICAL OPERATIONS, PART 1
Treatment strategies for life-threatening conditions and principles of triage.
- Unit 4 EMERGENCY MEDICAL OPERATIONS, PART 2
Head-to-toe assessments, treatment for various injuries
- Unit 5 LIGHT SEARCH AND RESCUE OPERATIONS
Techniques for size-up and search, lifting, cribbing, and rescuer safety
- Unit 6 CERT ORGANIZATION
Team organization, decision-making, documentation
- Unit 7 DISASTER PSYCHOLOGY
Team well-being, working with survivors' trauma
- Unit 8 TERRORISM AND CERT
Terrorist targets and weapons,

The Objectives of the Course

preparing home and work
Upon completion 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, controlling 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 treatments for various wounds.
11. Identify planning and size-up requirements for potential search and rescue situations.
12. Use safe techniques for debris removal.
13. Describe ways to protect rescuers during search and rescue.
14. Define terrorism and identify CERT procedures during an incident.

The target audiences for this course are private citizens, businesses and schools that want the skills and knowledge required to prepare for and respond to a disaster.

How Do You Get Involved?

First, recruit 15-25 interested people from your community, neighborhood, school or business. Some “natural” groups to approach and recruit are:

Community Groups – Homeowners’ associations, neighborhood watch groups, religious groups and similar organizations geographically distributed within the local area.

Business and Industry - Possible locations include office buildings, hotels, industrial complexes, nursing/rest homes.

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, explain what CERT is, how important it is to the safety of your neighborhood and community, and that it is an on-going, long-term commitment. It is living a prepared lifestyle.

Third, call your local emergency management office to request your classes and obtain information on books and equipment. Or you can call the NC Division of Emergency Management for additional information at 919-733-2500.

Interesting Web Sites

www.nccrimecontrol.org
www.ncem.org
www.fema.gov
www.volunteernc.org
www.citizen corps.gov
www.ready.gov

For Further Information Contact:

**New Hanover County Emergency
Management
910-798-6900**

