

COMMUNITY EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM (CERT) FACT SHEET



The Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program helps train people to be better prepared to respond to emergency situations in their communities. Team members are community volunteers trained in basic response skills by emergency personnel who are prepared to help save lives, prevent the spread of disease, and protect themselves, their families, and their community in the event of a disaster.

When emergencies happen, CERT members can give critical support to first responders, provide immediate assistance to victims, and help organize unaffiliated volunteers at a disaster site. CERT members can also help with non-emergency projects that help improve the safety of the community.

Trained CERT teams form a core component of the “Whole Community” approach to emergency management. This concept unites residents, emergency responders, businesses, organizations and community leaders, and government officials in understanding and assessing the needs of their respective communities. Together, these groups can then determine the best ways to collaborate, organize, and strengthen their resiliency to disasters and capacity to recover.

Training

The CERT course is taught in the community by a trained team of first responders who have completed a CERT Train-the-Trainer course conducted by their state training office for emergency management, or FEMA's Emergency Management Institute (EMI), located in Emmitsburg, Maryland.

What does a CERT member learn?

- Disaster preparedness
- Fire suppression
- Medical operations
- Search and rescue support
- Preparation and response to infectious disease outbreaks, biological terrorist attacks, and more.

After CERT members complete their training, they are recognized in their communities with a formal graduation ceremony. They receive an equipment bag to assist them if called upon during times of crises. The bag contains a hard hat, goggles, dust masks, work gloves, flashlight, identification vest, baseball cap, and a utility tool. It is a proud moment for all CERT volunteers.

For more information about the CERT program, visit the national CERT website, at <http://www.citizencorps.gov/cert>.

Trained and prepared CERT teams form a core component of the “Whole Community” approach to disaster preparedness and response.