CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

Starting & Maintaining a CERT Program: Resources

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CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

CERT Background Information: CERT Overview

Overview

> CERTs are formed by members of a neighborhood or workplace who want to be better prepared for the hazards that threaten their communities.

Beyond Disaster Response

> Initially, CERT programs were developed to assist communities in taking care of themselves in the aftermath of a major disaster when first responders are overwhelmed or unable to respond because of communication or transportation difficulties. As the CERT concept has taken hold across the country, however, CERTs have become much more than originally envisioned. CERTs have proven themselves to be an active and vital part of their communities' preparedness and response capability. For example, CERTs have been used to:

> - Distribute and/or install smoke alarms and batteries to the elderly and disabled.
> - Assist with evacuations and traffic control.
> - Promote community awareness of potential hazards and preparedness measures.
> - Supplement staffing at special events, such as parades.
> - Act as victims in training exercises.

> CERTs are an investment of local government's time and resources. To capitalize on this investment, program sponsors can view CERT members as a volunteer resource that can assist with public safety activities. Such an approach will actively involve members in serving their communities beyond disaster response and add value to the CERT program.

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

Overview (Continued)

CERT Standards and Protocols

The best source of help in an emergency or disaster is the paid or volunteer professional responder. But, if they are not available to address immediate life-saving needs or to protect property, CERT members can help. CERTs are not intended to replace a community's response capability, but rather, to serve as an important supplement to it.

The agency sponsoring the CERT program is creating a volunteer resource that is part of the community's operational capability following a disaster. That agency should develop training standards for CERT personnel and protocols for their activation and use.

CERT members must keep their safety in mind as their first priority. CERT volunteers must know their capabilities and the limitations of their training and equipment and work within those limitations.

CERTs do **not**:

- Suppress large fires.
- Enter structures that they consider heavily damaged and dangerous (e.g., leaning or moved from foundation).
- Perform hazardous materials cleanup or respond to incidents involving radiological, chemical, or biological agents.
- Perform medical, fire, or search and rescue operations beyond their level of training.
- Activate or deploy unless called for in their procedures.

CERTs are considered "Good Samaritans" and covered under the Volunteer Protection Act. CERT volunteers do not have any authority beyond serving as "Good Samaritan" when helping others.

When deployed appropriately, however, CERTs can complement and enhance first-response capability in neighborhoods and workplaces by ensuring the safety of themselves and their families working outward to the neighborhood or office and beyond until first responders arrive. CERTs can then assist first-response personnel as directed.

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

CERT Background Information: CERT Roles

The Role That CERTs Can Play to Augment Emergency Management and Response Capability Within Their Community

Following a major disaster, first responders who provide fire and medical services will not be able to meet the demand for these services.

CERT Training: Preparing for Emergency Response

Using the basic CERT curriculum, CERT personnel train to prepare for a disaster or overwhelming event by:

- Identifying and mitigating potential hazards in the home and workplace.
- Initiating plans to prepare themselves and their loved ones for the hazards that they face.
- Learning skills to help themselves, loved ones, and neighbors or fellow employees until professional response resources arrive.
- Working cooperatively as a team within their neighborhoods or workplaces.
- Maintaining a relationship with the agency that sponsors the CERT program.
- Participating in continuing education and training.
- Volunteering for projects to enhance the public safety of their communities.
- Understanding their capabilities and limitations when deployed.

During training, CERTs learn to:

- Prepare for the hazards that threaten their communities.
- Apply size-up and safety principles.
- Locate and turn off utilities.
- Extinguish small fires.
- Identify hazardous materials situations.
- Triage and treat victims.
- Set up a medical treatment area.
- Conduct searches and rescues in lightly and moderately damaged structures.
- Understand the psychological impact of a disaster on themselves and others.
- Organize CERT members and spontaneous volunteers for an effective and safe response.
- Apply response skills in a disaster simulation.

Following initial training, the sponsoring agency has the challenge of helping CERT members maintain and improve their skills through a variety of training programs, exercises, and special projects, all tailored at the local level to meet local needs.

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

CERT Roles During Emergencies

When a disaster or overwhelming event occurs and responders are not immediately available, CERTs can assist by:

- Conducting an initial size-up in their homes or workplaces.
- Reducing immediate dangers by turning off utilities, suppressing small fires, evacuating the area, and helping others.
- Treating people in the immediate area.
- Working with CERT members and volunteers to establish a command post, staging area, and medical triage and treatment areas.
- Collecting damage information and developing a plan of operation based on life-saving priorities and available resources.
- Applying their training to situations where CERT members can make a difference.
- Establishing and maintaining communication with responders.

Other CERT Roles

Depending on your plan for CERTs, the teams may fill other roles as well. For more information about CERTs and how they are used throughout the country, read the following articles from the electronic newsletter, "The Connection:"

- **Portland NETs . . . Bigger Than Disaster Response!**
  http://www.naem.com/connection/articles/portland.html

  All around the United States, fire departments, emergency management professionals and some law enforcement agencies are getting on board with community emergency response team training. In Portland, Oregon, CERT members (called Neighborhood Emergency Teams (NETs)) staff first aid booths at neighborhood fairs and parades; speak at PTA meetings, neighborhood association meetings, and service clubs; and assist Fire Bureau staff at community safety fairs.

- **Mitigation Actions by the CERT Team**
  http://www.naem.com/connection/5/edgewater5.html

  These two mitigation actions were organized and completed by the CERT members of Edgewater. The Fire Department supplied the blue hydrant markers and glue, and CERT did the rest. They asked the homeowners permission to mark their home address on the street curb and for a voluntary donation, and received 100% cooperation. Both these mitigation actions were well received by the residents of Edgewater.

- **CERT Proves to Be Valuable During the Florida Wildfires**
  http://www.naem.com/connection/articles1/edgewater.html

  CERT members in the Edgewater area staffed fire stations to answer incoming phone calls, disseminate public information, handle donations, and prepare meals for line personnel.

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

Other CERT Roles (Continued)

- **Partnership for Preparedness… Semper Paratus**
  http://www.naem.com/connection/4/partnership4.html

  In a day of shrinking budgets and small staffs, it is difficult for any public safety agency to maintain a high level of preparedness. Detection of wildfires in rural areas still relies on a person scaling a 100-foot tower in the heat of the day to watch for smoke. Alachua County CERTs are used to supplement fire tower staff during fire season.

- **Strength in Working Together**
  http://training.fema.gov/emiweb/cert/examp.htm

  CERTs perform many roles including working with Salt Lake City law enforcement personnel to search for a missing girl.

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

CERT Resources: Special Topics

Overview

Experienced CERT Program Coordinators have identified several areas that require special attention. Paying careful attention to these issues can make your program more inclusive and more successful. Special Topics presents each of these issues, together with tips for working through each as well as resources that you can refer to for more information.

Contents

This step includes the following resources:

- Meeting the Needs of all Participants
- Accommodating Special Needs
- Working With Students
- Reducing Liability
- Organizing CERT Teams
- Organizing CERT Communications
- Tips for Handling Special Issues
- Sample Hold Harmless/Permission Request

Web Resources

- Charity Channel (a website for volunteer managers)
  Web Address: http://charitychannel.com

- Protecting Yourself From Lawsuits
  Web Address: http://home.acadia.net/userpages/waldolva/binfo/lawsuits.htm

- Legal Information Institute, U.S. Code Collection, Limitation on Liability for Volunteers
  Web Address: http://www4.law.cornell.edu/uscode/42/14503.html

- Basic Incident Command Course, IS-195
  Web Address: http://training.fema.gov/EMIWeb/is195.htm

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

How To: Meeting the Needs of all Participants

CERT is a valuable program for everyone, and CERT Program Coordinators should encourage everyone to be involved in neighborhood and workplace preparedness.

Meeting Participant Needs

Everyone can benefit from preparedness education and training. Many CERT Program Managers have conducted training to meet the needs of all who want it, believing that there is a place for everyone in CERT. Program managers should attempt to provide reasonable accommodation for those who want to participate.

Recruiting Tips

When recruiting:

- Be honest about CERT requirements. Let people know that you will try to accommodate their needs.
- Don't underestimate the abilities of anyone. Everyone brings some skills to the CERT program. Try to match those skills with jobs performed by CERTs in a disaster.
- Talk to interested persons before class begins. Answer their questions, and identify their needs.

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

CERT Resources: Special Topics

How To: Accommodating Special Needs

Volunteers with special needs are likely to have their own adaptive equipment or other items they need to participate in the CERT program. However, there are some accommodations that you can make to ensure that everyone gets the most from the CERT program.

Accommodating Individuals With Visual Disabilities

Common accommodations for individuals with visual disabilities include:

- Making furniture in the classroom easy to maneuver around, if possible.
- Reserving a seat near the front of the room, allowing room for guide dogs.
- Allowing the individual to orient him/herself to the room before training begins.
- Encouraging the use of a tape recorder for class notes.
- Reinforcing all visual directions with verbal cues.
- Ensuring that lighting is adequate. (Remember, not everyone who is visually impaired is completely blind.)
- Saying aloud material that is written on chart paper or projected.
- Reading through any visually presented material.
- Asking questions to verify comprehension.
- Calling the individual by name when you speak to him or her.
- Identifying yourself when you approach the individual and when you leave.
- Providing a large print version of the course materials, if possible.

Accommodating Individuals With Hearing Disabilities

Some ways by which you can accommodate individuals with hearing disabilities include:

- Allowing the individual to select his or her seat.
- Identifying the speaker, and insist on only one speaker at a time.
- Verifying that you are speaking loudly and clearly enough.
- Repeating questions asked from others.
- Summarizing discussions.
- Positioning yourself so that the hearing-impaired individual can see your face. Remain in one position as much as possible when speaking.
- Writing complex questions on chart paper.
- Ensuring that you do not stand with your back to a light source. The hearing impaired need to be able to see you.

Accommodating Individuals With Speech Disabilities

Accommodations for individuals with speech disabilities include:

- Providing opportunities for the individual to speak, but do not require it.
- Allowing the individual to express him/herself. Do not find words for him/her.
- Maintaining comfortable eye contact while the individual speaks.
- Using your regular speaking voice when addressing the individual. Do not assume that the individual also has a hearing disability.

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

How To: Accommodating Special Needs (Continued)

Accommodating Individuals With Physical Disabilities

When accommodating individuals with physical disabilities, ask the individual to explain his or her limitations. Then, depending on the individual's needs:

- Verify that the setting is wheelchair accessible.
- Allow the use of a tape recorder or ask another volunteer to provide notes.
- Modify activities as necessary. Remember that all activities are team-oriented, and that buddies and safety officers are always a requirement. These roles may be appropriate for a volunteer with a physical disability.

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

CERT Resources: Special Topics

How To: Working With Students

Students have proven to be a huge asset to some CERT programs. Students have used local CERT programs to fulfill local community service requirements. In other areas, student CERT members have gone on for training as volunteer firefighters and EMTs. But working with students raises some issues that you will need to address before including them in your program.

Developing a Strategy

Before deciding whether to allow students to participate in your CERT program, you should develop a strategy for who can participate and how.

Topic	Points to Consider
Who Can Participate	▪ Students as young as 14 have participated in some CERT programs with parental permission. Other programs allow student participation only if a parent also participates. Consider the needs in your community to determine what age or other restrictions to place on student participation.
How Students Participate	▪ Students who lack maturity may take unnecessary risks during classroom activities, exercises, and activation. ▪ State laws may prohibit students under a specified age from participating in some types of tasks or from participating during specified hours (e.g., after 10 p.m.).

Recruiting Students

Recruiting students can be easy, especially if you have the cooperation of the local school district. Some suggestions for recruiting students include the following:

▪ If the school district requires community service, work with the district to ensure that students who volunteer for CERTs receive community service credit for their time.

▪ Develop targeted brochures and flyers. Include your name and phone number or email address on all recruiting materials. Coordinate with the local high school to ensure that the brochures and flyers are placed where they will draw the students' attention.

▪ Schedule an introductory session for potential student volunteers and their parents. Require parents to accompany their students to this session. This session will allow parents and students to ask questions about the program and allow you to establish ground rules and expectations for participation.

▪ If possible, allow students and their parents to observe a classroom session or, better yet, an exercise. Observing CERT activities will provide a true "flavor" of what CERTs do and how.

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

How To: Working With Students (Continued)

Training Students

Students do not require changes in or accommodations to the training to be successful, but may require additional safeguards to ensure their safety. When training student volunteers:

- Establish a climate for safety early in the class. Emphasize the importance of what CERTs do by pointing out that CERTs can make the difference between life and death-but only if CERT members operate safely.

- State the classroom and activity rules clearly and early in the training. Repeat them as necessary, and do not allow deviation from the established safety standard.

- Observe student volunteers closely, especially during the early activities. Make corrections to technique and safety requirements, but do not single students out unless it is absolutely necessary to avoid injury.

- Counsel students who ignore safety rules privately, if possible. Tell them that continued violation of safety rules will cause them to be excluded from the program. Follow through and send students home if they continue to ignore the rules.

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

CERT Resources: Special Topics

How To: Reducing Liability

Some of the most frequently asked questions about CERT programs concern liability and how to manage the liability for the CERT program. Actually, providing training in how to respond safely and effectively in an emergency is a positive way to address liability and prepare CERT members, especially given the alternative of having spontaneous volunteers "show up to help." There are proactive steps you can take to manage liability concerns for your program.

Conducting Research

As a CERT Program Manager, you are also a volunteer manager who needs to become familiar with the regulatory requirements for volunteers in your State. Virtually all States have laws dealing with liability, interviewing, and discrimination in selection, and you will need to conduct some research to ensure that your program is compliant.

Some suggestions for conducting research include:

- **Consult your jurisdiction's legal counsel.** Consulting with legal counsel is probably the fastest way to find answers to most—but not all—of your questions.
- **Conduct Internet research.** There is a vast array of sources available to you on the Internet if you know where to look.
- **Talk with other CERT Program Coordinators** to discuss how they addressed the liability issue.

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

How To: Reducing Liability (Continued)

Conducting Research: Web Resources

This table includes links to helpful web resources for conducting your research.

Web Resources	Information Provided
Protecting Yourself From Lawsuits http://home.acadia.net/userpages/waldolva/binfo/lawsuits.htm	▪ Background information on theories of liability and how they relate in application ▪ Steps to take to limit liability
Legal Institution Institute http://www4.law.cornell.edu/uscode/42/14503.html	▪ Basic liability protection for volunteers, as established by 42 U.S.C., Chapter 139, Section 14503 ▪ Limitations on punitive damages based on actions of volunteers ▪ Exceptions to limitations on liability
State Liability Laws for Charitable Organizations and Volunteers http://www94311.temp.w1.com/pubs/ssl_01rev.pdf	▪ State liability laws for charitable organizations and volunteers
"Federal Law Protects Non-Profit Volunteers" Non-Profit Issues, December 1997 http://www.nonprofitissues.com/ready/rr97dec1.html	▪ Liability protections under the Volunteer Protection Act
Thomas Legislative Information on the Internet http://thomas.loc.gov	▪ Information on recently passed (Federal) laws by searching by bill number, bill text, or subject
State and Local Government on the Net http://www.statelocalgov.net/index.cfm	▪ Departments or agency by State, including State volunteer agencies
LawGuru.com http://www.lawguru.com	▪ State and Federal laws and specific subjects, such as disability rights ▪ Answers to questions about specific legal issues (submitted using a web form)

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

How To: Reducing Liability (Continued)

Reducing Liability During Training: Instructors

Steps that you can take with your instructors to help reduce liability include:

- Establishing training standards and safety requirements for training.
- Briefing all instructors on their responsibilities to conduct safe and effective training.
- Ensuring that all instructors are prepared to meet the objectives for their sessions.
- Providing co-instructors to assist the instructors for all activities.
- Ensuring that all instructors model appropriate safety behavior, such as safety gear for all demonstrations.

Additionally, be sure that your instructors understand that they can give students permission to opt out of an activity if they have a condition that they may aggravate by participating.

Reducing Liability During Training: Students

Steps that you can take with CERT students to help reduce liability include:

- Ensure that students understand that they may opt out of activities if they have a condition that they may aggravate by participating.
- Require all students to sign a hold harmless agreement. (See sample agreement in the resources.)
- Explain the potential hazards that students may face in class activities, during exercises, and during activation.
- Provide copies of all CERT safety rules and requirements to each student. Require them to sign one copy and return it to you before class begins. Encourage the students to keep the other copy for their records.
- Require all students to wear safety gear for all activities.
- When you see an unsafe act, correct it immediately!
- If someone is injured during class, document the injury and ensure that the student receives appropriate medical treatment.
- Emphasize that rescuer safety is the primary concern in training and activation.

Reducing Liability During Training: Classroom/Exercise Areas

Steps that you can take to ensure that the CERT classroom and exercise area are safe include:

- Walk through the classroom and exercise area(s) before each class to identify and correct unsafe conditions.
- Check all to ensure that it is in good working order.

Be sure to make these checks **before every class begins**.

Reducing Liability During Training: Materials

The main step to take to reduce liability related to the CERT materials is to ensure that you have written releases for all copyrighted materials (including photographs and cartoons). (Note that if you are using FEMA's materials without alteration, all necessary copyright releases have been secured.) Remember that photographs and other materials found on the Internet are copyrighted.

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

How To: Reducing Liability (Continued)

Reducing Liability: During Exercises

Always take the measures below to reduce liability during exercises:

- Conduct a pre-exercise briefing in which you provide the objectives (including safety objectives) for the exercise.
- Treat all drills, functional exercises, and full-scale exercises as the real thing. Enforce all safety rules strictly.
- Stress teamwork, safety equipment, and the use of the buddy system.
- If you see an unsafe act, intervene immediately!
- Conduct a post-exercise debriefing, and cover safety issues as part of the debriefing.
- Stress the need to document everything using the forms approved by the jurisdiction.
- If someone is injured, document the injury, and ensure that the volunteer receives appropriate medical care.

Reducing Liability: During Team Activation

Take the measures below to reduce liability during team activation:

- Educate your departments about the CERT program, the level of training provided, and how to access and use CERT members during an emergency or disaster.
- Require that all team activations are in accordance with established CERT protocols.
- Require team leaders to verify that all CERT members have the necessary tools and equipment, including safety gear, for the response.
- Require a good sizeup and communication of sizeup information to first responders as soon as possible after arrival at the scene.
- Require complete documentation of team assignments, actions taken, results, and communications with first response agency personnel.
- Stress that CERT members should respond in accordance with their training. Being a CERT member does not provide rights or privileges beyond being a CERT volunteer.
- If a CERT member is injured during activation, ensure that the injury is documented and that the volunteer receives appropriate medical treatment.

For these measures to work as intended, you will need to take action **before** activation and reinforce the measures during team exercises.

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

How To: Organizing CERT Teams

Real incidents are chaotic, and CERT members have little or no experience in dealing with the chaos outside of drills and exercises. To bring order to chaos, CERTs are organized under the principles of the Incident Command System (ICS). CERT members, however, may have difficulty understanding how ICS works. This topic provides tips for making ICS easier for CERT members to understand.

Management Principles and ICS

First responders who use ICS daily understand the advantages of flexible organization and manageable span of control that ICS offers. In an actual event, professional responders use ICS to divide activities into functional groups so that:

- There are clear lines of supervision.
- The person with decisionmaking authority (i.e., the Incident Commander) is not overwhelmed.
- There is a limited span of control for each leader or manager.

ICS Functions

ICS functions are similar to those used in the workplace. Management (the Incident Commander) sets priorities and makes decisions about what is to be done based on the information received from staff functions:

- **Operations** implements the decisions made by the Incident Commander.
- **Planning** receives, filters, and compiles information coming in from the incident scene.
- **Logistics** ensures that the personnel, equipment, and tools required by operations to implement the Incident Commander's decisions are in the right place at the right time in the right quantities.
- **Administration** collects all incident data after it has been compiled, acted on, and/or is no longer needed.

# CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

How To: Organizing CERT Teams (Continued)

Applying ICS Principles to CERTs

In simple terms:

- **Management** (the CERT Team Leader) is responsible for deciding what is to be done.
- **Operations** is responsible for how it gets done.
- **Logistics** is responsible for how it gets supported.
- **Planning** is responsible for determining what is going on and how the information gets communicated and/or displayed.
- **Administration** is responsible for how everything gets documented.

The CERT/ICS Command function is shown in the organization chart below.
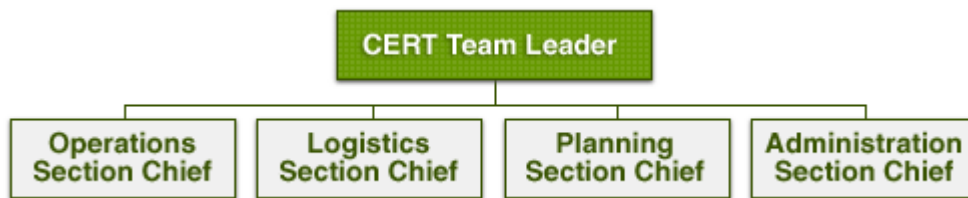
Caption: The CERT Team Leader is at the top of the organization chart. Below the CERT Team leader on a second level are the Operations Section Chief, the Logistics Section Chief, the Planning Section Chief, and the Administration Section Chief.

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

How To: Organizing CERT Teams (Continued)

Expanded CERT Organization

To maintain a manageable span of control, each ICS section can be expanded or contracted as necessary. For example, teams assigned to the Operations Section are shown in the organization chart below. Note that each type of team has a Group Leader who reports directly to the Operations Section Chief.

An expanded CERT Operations Section is shown below. Note that, just as the CERT/ICS organization can expand to meet the needs of an unfolding event, it can also contract as the event winds down.
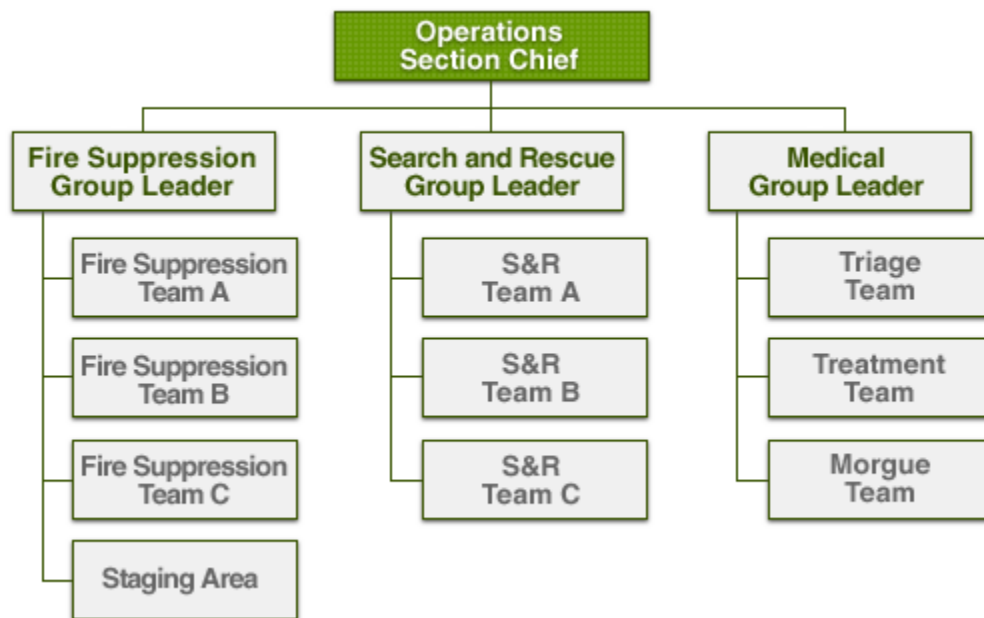
Caption: The Operations Section Chief is at the top of the organization chart. On a second level below the Section Chief are the Fire Suppression Group Leader, the Search and Rescue Group Leader, and the Medical Group Leader. Below the Fire Suppression Group Leader are Fire Suppression Team A, Fire Suppression Team B, Fire Suppression Team C, and the Staging Area. Below the Search and Rescue Group Leader are S&R Team A, S&R Team B, and S&R Team C. Below the Medical Group Leader are the Triage Team, the Treatment Team, and the Morgue Team.

Training and Exercising

ICS and incident management are areas that will require training beyond that provided in the basic CERT materials. If possible, develop an additional module to provide additional information about how to establish an incident command, select incident facilities, and apply the principles of ICS to CERT.

Finally, provide exercises that allow CERTs to apply what they've learned about ICS in a simulated incident. Be sure to conduct a thorough debriefing so that lessons learned are identified and the CERT members' questions are answered.

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

CERT Resources: Special Topics

Organizing CERT Communications

Communication between team members during CERT activation and operations is critical. During alert or mobilization, team members need to communicate rapidly and efficiently. How communications are organized becomes extremely important to CERT operations.

Selecting Communications Methods

There is a range of methods for communicating among CERT members, and each has advantages and disadvantages. In most CERT programs, some combination of the communication methods is used.

Method	Advantages	Disadvantages
Pager	- Can be used to alert/mobilize team quickly - Some offer text messaging for communicating between individuals or the entire team - Unit cost is relatively inexpensive	- Service can be expensive, especially for two-way messaging - Cannot be used for tactical or emergency communications
Land-Line	- Everyone has one - Most useful for mobilization when advance warning of an incident is possible	- Must use a "tree," which can be interrupted if protocols are not followed - Takes time to use - May not be available following some disasters
Cellular Phone	- Ownership becoming more common - Portable	- Initial and continuing costs for individuals - Must use a "tree," which can be interrupted if protocols are not followed - May not be available following some disasters - May be unreliable in some areas - Battery life is short - Not secure
Two-Way Radios	- Portable and inexpensive - Can speak to multiple persons simultaneously	- Not secure; others can listen and/or interrupt CERT communications - Limited range, especially in areas with tall buildings - Relatively short battery life - Should not be used in bomb threat situations

Source: This information was provided by Jim Piper, Aptos-La Selva Fire Department, Aptos, California

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CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

Organizing CERT Communications (Continued)

Planning Considerations

When determining how CERTs will communicate, you should first identify who will need to communicate to whom.

Communication methods for team alerts and activation should be discussed with the teams. Some teams may agree to purchase Nextel® cellular phones with two-way communication capabilities if they are available in the area. Other teams may decide that a land-line system will work best. Whatever method is selected for alert and notification, it should be:

- Efficient and organized.
- Available to all CERT members.
- Tested during a functional exercise to ensure that it works.

Communicating During a Response

During a response, CERTs will have a variety of communications requirements. Some of the communications required of all CERTs during emergencies include:

- Intra-team communications, especially during search and rescue operations.
- Inter-team communications required to communicate logistics, request assistance, and provide status.
- Group Leaders to CERT Team Leader.
- CERT Team Leader to first responders (at the Incident Command Post).

Setting Up Communications

As you think about setting up communications, consider two-way radios for:

- Intra-squad and inter-squad communications. Each team should be assigned a different channel or frequency. Section chiefs (Operations, Logistics, Planning, and Administration) should be assigned a separate channel or frequency to communicate with each other and with the Team Leader.
- Communications with first responders. A separate frequency should be assigned to these communications.

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

CERT Resources: Special Topics

Organizing CERT Communications (Continued)

Communicating Via Amateur Radio

If your community has a RACES or ARES organization, you may wish to incorporate a radio operator to communicate between the Team Leader (Command Post) and the Incident Command or Emergency Operations Center (EOC).

Regardless of how you establish CERT communications, be sure to test them thoroughly during exercises.

Visit the below links to access Connection articles on CERT Communications:

- Some Thoughts on CERT Communications
  Web Address: http://www.naem.com/connection/6/communications42.html

- Amateur Radio and the Seminole County CERT
  Web Address: http://www.naem.com/connection/4/seminole4.html

- Communication Systems Fail - CERT Members Succeed
  Web Address: http://www.naem.com/connection/4/washington4.html

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

Words of Advice: Tips for Handling Special Resources

Patricia Yuen - San Francisco, California
Involving Children in CERT

Children are a wonderful resource to the program in many ways. They bring with them so much enthusiasm. They are a reason for their parents to be more active with the NERT (CERT) Program as we all wait for the "Big One".

Related Links:

- NERT Training for Kids!
  Web Address: http://www.naem.com/connection/4/sfkids.html

- San Francisco NERT website
  Web Address: http://www.sfnert.org/index.htm

Laura Baggett - Fremont, California
Removing Obstacles

When you have no obstacles placed in front of you, you soon learn the only obstacles are the ones you create. We did not look at the deaf community, educationally challenged, or our wheelchair bound members as special needs groups. They are citizens of Fremont that need training in disaster preparedness. They are among the best we have. We do not segregate them. They train and drill with the rest of the community. All of our members work well together meet any challenges that arise. We are the true meaning of "TEAM."

Related Link:

- Fremont Fire Department CERT Program and the Hearing Impaired
  Web Address: http://www.naem.com/connection/articles/articles2/Freemont.html

Chandra Fox - Edmonds, Washington
Working With Volunteers With Special Needs

We use disabled volunteers on a regular basis and encourage all to participate regardless of any disabilities. The foremost benefit is that the entire curriculum is very empowering for disabled volunteers. When a disabled person comes in expecting to be pushed aside, we treat him or her with the respect of any of our volunteers. We expect the disabled volunteers to participate and that really makes them feel valued that they do have something to contribute. We stress that even with disabilities all volunteers have strengths and skills that are useful to the effort. We really emphasize that no matter what limitations they have, in a disaster situation there is always going to be something they can do to help. Sometimes they may not have the physical capability to perform tasks, but they may have the required knowledge and background.

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

Words of Advice: Tips for Handling Special Resources (Continued)

Jim Piper - Aptos, California
Establishing Communication Systems

The importance of communications between team members during CERT activation and operations cannot be overstated. During either an alert or a mobilization, team members need to rapidly get in touch and stay in touch with each other.

Considerations for team communications should consider the following:

- Intra-squad communications, especially during search-and-rescue operations.
- Inter-squad communications (e.g., to coordinate logistics, assistance, etc.).
- Squad Leader to CERT command post.
- CERT command post to civil authority incident command post (e.g., fire department or emergency operations center) and/or to cooperative agencies (e.g., Red Cross).
- Locale of operations: urban, suburban, rural.

Related Links:

- Some Thoughts on CERT Communications
  Web Address: http://www.naem.com/connection/6/communications42.html

- Amateur Radio and the Seminole County CERT
  Web Address: http://www.naem.com/connection/4/seminole4.html

- Communication Systems Fail - CERT Members Succeed
  Web Address: http://www.naem.com/connection/4/washington4.html

Frank Lucier - San Francisco, California
Using the Incident Command System

The Incident Command System (ICS) has proven effective in managing to and responding to emergencies since 1975. CERTs should be using it too. ICS puts the tasks that need to be done to manage and/or respond to a disaster into 5 separate boxes or functions (management, operations, logistics, planning/intelligence, administration). By separating disaster tasks into these functions, we have a span of control (1 leader for every 3 to 5 team members) so that CERTs will not be overwhelmed with what they have to do. The problem is breaking down, what can be a very complex system, into something that is easy for the CERTs to use.

Related Link:

- Transitioning to ICS Positions
  Web Address: http://www.naem.com/connection/articles/articles2/ics.html

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

Words of Advice: Tips for Handling Special Resources (Continued)

Ronald Nelson- Los Atlos, California
Forming School Response Teams

The Los Altos High School community realizes that we may have to rely on our own resources in the event of a disaster or emergency at school. This is very apparent when one looks back at recent natural disasters in our State such as: the Whittier Narrows Earthquake of 1987; the Loma Prieta Earthquake of 1989; and the Northridge Earthquake of 1994. When viewing videos of these disasters, citizens are performing much of the rescue work, as there are not enough emergency service workers to meet the needs. Consequently, Los Altos High School is beginning to form a response team at school, which we call the School & Community Emergency Response Team (SCERT).

Related Link:

▪ First on the Scene with SCERT
  Web Address: http://www.naem.com/connection/6/scert42.html

Michelle Hale - Kent, Washington
Partnering With School Personnel

Kent, Washington is vulnerable to a variety of natural and technological hazards. School facilities, personnel and students are not exempt to the effects of these hazards. The Kent School District, Kent Fire & Life Safety and the Emergency Management Office have formed a partnership to train school personnel to prepare for and respond to these hazards.

Related Link:

▪ S.E.R.T. School Emergency Response Training
  Web Address: http://www.naem.com/connection/5/sert5.html

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

Words of Advice: Tips for Handling Special Resources (Continued)

Jacqueline Perry - Seminole County, Florida
Giving Teenagers an Eye-Opening Experience

The students in Winter Springs High School's Environmental Class have successfully completed the CERT training. These adventurous students and teachers were the first graduates of our special Pilot CERT Program provided within the Environmental Vocational Program receiving high school credit for learning how to help themselves and fellow students in their own environment.

After learning proper techniques, the students were amazed with their abilities and newly found skills. They were able to perform tasks they did not believe they could. The teenagers had an eye opening experience as they crawled through a dark closet and science laboratory searching for their fallen peers. They experienced first hand gratification as they rescued their injured classmates and brought them to safety.

Related Link:

- Seminole County C.E.R.T. Training at Winter Springs High School
  Web Address: http://www.naem.com/connection/articles/articles2/Seminole.html

Harry Small - Boca Raton, Florida
Working With High School Students

We regularly use high school seniors. Schools are now starting to implement a mandatory 125 hour community service project for graduating seniors. We provide this training and students get credit for community service hours. Students are also involved in drills. Ages 13-17 are encouraged to take the training, but are required to do so with a parent or guardian. Using students also generates support with parents and extends participation with others because of the student contacts.

Related Link:

- The Boca Raton CERT newsletter
  Web Address: http://www.ci.boca-raton.fl.us/fire/Fire%20Letter/CERT/
  CERT%20Sept%202002.pdf

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

Words of Advice: Tips for Handling Special Resources (Continued)

Frank Lucier - San Francisco, California
Limiting Liability

For the training, I think it is really not an issue but there are a few simple rules. First is hazard mitigation at the training site. Instructors should get there early and remove or fix any potential hazard that could injure the participants. Can't tell you how many extension cords we have taped down.

Second is span of control. Sometimes our classes get a little big. It would not be unusual to have classes of 60 or more people once or twice a year. One train-the-trainer we did had over 100 people. For the lecture portion it really doesn't matter how many people you have. But for the small group and especially the practical/skills and disaster simulation section (where you have the potential for injury) you have to maintain the span of control of about 1 instructor or safety person for every 7 or less participants. We trained over 8,000 people while I was with the Department and we never had a single injury in a training, drill or exercise.

The other part of liability is when CERTs are operating in a real disaster. We have to remember that we are really teaching them life skills with the exception of maybe search patterns and building damage. The rest of the skills they can use day-to-day in their normal lives. As long as they operate within the scope of the training, liability should not be an issue.

Related Link:

- Training, Drills & Liability
  Web Address: http://www.naem.com/connection/4/avert4.html

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

CERT Resources: Special Topics

Sample Hold Harmless/Permission Request

Hold harmless/permission requests can reduce your CERT program's liability. Many CERT programs have all students sign this type of agreement before starting training. A model agreement is shown below.

[COMMUNITY NAME]
COMMUNITY EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM PROGRAM
HOLD HARMLESS/PERMISSION REQUEST

I, _____, hereby request permission to participate in the _____ Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program. I understand that this training will involve active physical participation, which includes a potential risk of personal injury and/or personal property damage. I make this request with full knowledge of the possibility of personal injury and/or personal property damage. Further, I have read and understand the program outline that describes all class sections and the associated activities.

I agree to hold The American Red Cross, the _____, _____ Fire Department, [COMMUNITY NAME] and [COMMUNITY NAME] Emergency Management, and their agents and personnel, harmless from any and all claims, actions, suits, and/or injury that I may suffer and which may arise as a result of my participation in the above mentioned class.

I agree to follow the rules established by the instructors, and to exercise reasonable care while participating in the CERT program. I understand that if I fail to follow the instructor's rules and regulations or if I fail to exercise reasonable care, I can be administratively removed from the program.

By executing this release I certify that I have read this release in its entirety, understand all of its terms and have had any questions regarding the release or its effect satisfactory answered. I sign this release freely and voluntarily.

_____   _____
Signature   *Date*

_____   _____
Emergency Contact Name   *Emergency Contact Number*

Comments:

_____   _____
Signature of Instructor   *Date*

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

Starting a CERT Program - Step 1: Assessing Needs

Overview

Where should you begin? Just as in emergency planning, you should begin by assessing your community's disaster preparedness.

How can CERT augment your community's response capability? The answer to this question will help you determine the role CERTs should play. Many communities are forming Citizen Corps Councils. These councils can be a partner in helping you start a CERT program.

Contents

This step includes the following resources:

- The CERT Role in Your Community
- Developing Program Goals
- Questions to Get You Started
- Tips for Assessing Needs
- Community Hazard Analysis: Review Worksheet

Web Resources

- CERT Program Coordinators: Networking Contacts
  Web Address: http://training.fema.gov/emiweb/cert/dir.htm

- Citizens Corps Website
  Web Address: www.citizencorps.gov

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

Starting a CERT Program - Step 1: Assessing Needs

How To: The CERT Role in Your Community

It is too cost prohibitive for response agencies to staff for major disasters or even for large emergencies. One way that response agencies seek to solve resource shortages is through mutual aid agreements and other cooperative efforts. But in a disaster setting, mutual aid partners may be unable to provide support or there may be damage to transportation routes, communication links, or other critical infrastructure that prevents a rapid response.

Your Community's Hazard Analysis

To determine what could potentially affect your community's response capability—and, therefore, the potential roles for CERT teams, it is good to start by reviewing the community's hazard analysis.

Your local Emergency Manager probably has already done one. He or she should be able to provide you with the analysis and any background information you need about the hazards facing your community.

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

How To: Developing Program Goals and Objectives

Clear program goals establish the basis for the CERT program in your community. Therefore, one of your first tasks as Program Coordinator will be to develop goal statements that reflect what you want the program to do.

Avoid General Goals

Often, Program Coordinators start with an overall goal for the program, such as . . .

". . . to improve the overall preparedness and response capability in the community."
However, such a general goal will not be enough to develop your program. You will need to develop one or more additional goal statements that will describe just how CERTs will accomplish the general goal.

Establish Specific Goals

Some examples of more specific goals for CERTs are:

- To enable neighborhood or workplace teams to prepare for and respond effectively to an event until professional responders arrive.
- To provide a link between neighborhood or workplace teams and professional responders.

Set Other Goals

You may wish to develop other goals, depending on how you intend to use your CERTs. These goals may include functions, such as:

- To improve community preparedness by improving the credibility of neighbor-to-neighbor information.
- To support the community's public safety efforts (through such efforts as installing smoke alarms or by providing standby medical support at community events, etc.).

Review Goal Setting Resources

Take time to browse the CERT website, talk to responders, citizens, and employers to see how CERTs could be used to the greatest benefit in your community. Then, develop one or more goals for your CERT program.

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

Starting a CERT Program - Step 1: Assessing Needs

Questions to Get You Started

Take a few minutes to review the questions below. Answering these questions will help you determine your community's strengths and challenges and your strategy for implementing the CERT program.

Category	Questions
Baseline of Community Awareness	▪ How would you assess the community's awareness of risk? ▪ Have there been community-based public safety efforts? ▪ Have some homeowners and businesses implemented preparedness measures?
Industry and Business	▪ What businesses have a history of actively preparing for emergencies? ▪ What businesses are required by law to maintain response plans? ▪ What are the most influential employers in your community? ▪ Which businesses have a corporate culture that encourages volunteerism? ▪ What are the prominent business organizations or associations in your community?
Media	▪ Which of the television, radio, or print media in your community are more community-service oriented? ▪ Are there journalists or reporters who have prepared stories on natural hazards, emergency preparedness, or emergency response exercises? ▪ Which local media outlets have the greatest potential to be effective partners? ▪ Can you encourage the favorite local weather forecaster to be an active participant?
Health Care Providers	▪ Which health care providers are most active in promoting public safety? ▪ Can you encourage medical professionals to participate actively to promote preparedness?
Community Leaders	▪ Which community leaders might champion this initiative? ▪ Which community organizations are typically active in community initiatives or events? ▪ Can you get explicit support from local public officials?
Educational Institutions	▪ Have any educational institutions participated in any type of natural hazard preparedness or response activities? ▪ Are there any existing initiatives at area colleges and universities that would make a natural partner with CERT (e.g., programs in emergency planning or public education)? ▪ Does the local school district require its students to perform community service?

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

Starting a CERT Program - Step 1: Assessing Needs

Words of Advice: Tips for Assessing Needs

Joe Lowry - Memphis, Tennessee
Assess Risks and Develop a Plan

Make sure you do a risk assessment, look at the events that could possibly affect your community, and then use that as a starting point for teaching citizens how to prepare themselves to survive.

Community demographics are very important to consider when planning a CERT program. A great benefit to the program is knowing the people and their vocation so that you know who you can count on for CERT resources and community volunteers.

Develop a written response plan. A written plan enables the team to become a self-sustaining entity even after the team's founders have moved away from the neighborhood. A written plan also allows the team to respond effectively if the team's leaders are unable to respond. Any team member should be able to open the plan and implement it.

Don't limit yourself. Look at the resources you have available and utilize them. Undeniably the program evolves: if people stay with the program and identify with it, it takes on a life of its own. If you stick to the rigid idea of the class itself you're limiting yourself.

Rachel Jacky - Portland, Oregon
Begin By Setting Goals

Spend time up front to figure out what your needs are and how you're going to address those needs.

It may be tempting to simply start training teams with the material available from FEMA, but it's good to spend some time figuring out your program goals and how you'll address those goals.

There are a number of groups (for example, neighborhood associations, fire department, law enforcement, and transportation department) in any community for whom the CERTs could be a real resource. And, there may be other groups who aren't sure about the CERT model. It's good to talk with representatives of all of these groups when setting program goals.

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

Words of Advice: Tips for Assessing Needs (Continued)

Joe Lowry - Memphis, Tennessee
Consider Hazards, Communications, and Logistics

It is so very important to consider the hazards that are possible within the community and then plan accordingly. Recognize all of the variables that can take place during the event of a specific emergency and then set your goals around these variables and possibilities.

It is important to consider the communications available within the community. Communications is such an integral part of the program and knowing the community's capabilities is a critical first step.

All the logistical aspects of the community response must be considered when setting goals for the CERT program. These logistics play a key role in what can be utilized during an emergency situation.

Your CERT plan should have non-emergency as well as emergency functions, a commitment to continuing education, and strategy for sustaining the program.

Dale Kleos - Whatcom County, Washington
Allow for Growth

Don't be afraid to let your CERT program develop at the hands of its volunteers. As your program evolves it will take on a life of its own. If people stay with the program and identify with it, then they will have ideas for improving it. Don't be limited by your original plan.

Frank Lucier - San Francisco, California
Determine Deployment Procedures

It's important to first decide how CERT teams will operate in a real disaster prior to starting the program. What will cause them to self-activate? How will they be called up? What will be their area of responsibility? How will they communicate with emergency services? Get the operational questions answered.

Start small! Make your goals achievable. The program will take on a life of its own once it's up and running. Make sure that the start-up phase is manageable.

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

Starting a CERT Program - Step 1: Assessing Needs

Community Hazard Analysis: Review Worksheet

Review your community's hazard analysis, and consider how CERTs could contribute in response to your community's high-risk and high-impact hazards. Some items to consider as you complete your review are listed below.

1. Complete the matrix below to determine if the risks posed by your community's highest-risk hazards can be met by CERTs, given their areas of training, level of training, and experience.

Hazard/Event	CERT Training Area						
	Emergency Preparedness	Fire Safety	Emergency Medical Ops	Light Search and Rescue	Team Organization	Disaster Psychology	Public Safety
1.							
2.							
3.							
4.							
5.							
6.							
7.							
8.							
9.							
10.							

2. In addition to the basic CERT training for response in neighborhoods or workplaces, what other ways could CERT assist your organization?

3. What other roles could CERTs play (e.g., distributing smoke alarms, providing medical support at community events)?

4. What additional training would be required?

5. What equipment will you give CERT and what will they have to supply on their own?

6. What is the minimum number of CERTs that would be required to make the program viable?

7. How will you divide your community to make CERT team assignments (e.g., by neighborhood, fire district, police precinct)?

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

Starting a CERT Program - Step 2: Identifying Resources

Overview

Starting a CERT program requires resources—personnel, equipment, and materials—and some type of program funding will be required. Local government may be your source of funding, you may get a grant, or you may have to be creative in how you fund your program. Step 2: Identifying Resources, provides some suggestions to help you determine how much your program will cost and how to fund it.

Contents

This step includes the following resources:

- Funding a CERT Program
- Ideas for Obtaining CERT Resources
- CERT Program Personnel Resources
- Tips for Obtaining Resources
- CERT Resources Requirements Worksheet
- Sample CERT Budget
- CERT Program Costs Worksheet

Web Resources

- Internal Revenue Service: Charities and Non-Profits
  Web Address: http://www.irs.gov/charities/article/0,,id=96109,00.html

- Association of Volunteer Emergency Response Teams
  Web Address: http://www.avertdisasters.org/AVERTOffice.html

- Connection Newsletter Article: "Who, What, Where, When, Why, and How Do You Begin?"
  Web Address: http://www.naem.com/connection/5/begin5.html

- Connection Newsletter Article: "CERT in the Rural Community: The Melrose Model"
  Web Address: http://www.naem.com/connection/5/melrose5.html

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CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

Starting a CERT Program - Step 2: Identifying Resources

How To: Funding a CERT Program

How much funding is required to start and maintain a CERT program? The answer to that question will be determined by your CERT plan and will be based on factors, such as:

- The number of CERTs that you will train, initially, then on a continuing basis.
- The role that CERTs will play in your community. (CERTs that have functions that are not covered in the basic curriculum will require additional training and supplies.)
- Equipment that you will supply to each team (e.g., hardhat, vest, ID, gloves, goggles, medical kits).
- Costs for instructors, training facilities, and equipment.
- Costs for supplemental training, exercises, and team maintenance activities.
- The demographic makeup of the community (e.g., size, economic makeup, languages spoken, etc.).

After you have answered these and other questions that you may have about the cost factors involved for your CERT program, you will need to develop a budget and determine the best approach to funding your program.

The job aid, Funding Your CERT Program, will help you determine what your costs are. After determining total and per-student costs, your next step is to obtain the funding necessary for the program.

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

Starting a CERT Program - Step 2: Identifying Resources

How To: Ideas for Obtaining CERT Resources

This job aid presents some sources of funding or in-kind contributions, in addition to agency support, that have been successful for CERT Program Coordinators. As you review the list, consider your community. You may identify other sources for the resources you need.

As you arrange for funding, remember that most communities will not establish a separate account for CERT funds. Be sure to check with the appropriate personnel locally to determine the process required to receive funding for the CERT program.

- **Request a line item in the community budget.** Communities that are committed to emergency preparedness and response may be able to support at least part of your program costs on a continuing basis.

- **Charge a fee.** Some communities charge a fee to cover the costs of their materials and equipment. While this is not the preferred method for funding CERT programs, it is a viable alternative in some communities. Be careful if you plan to develop CERTs in low-income areas. Many residents in low-income areas cannot afford to pay for a CERT program and will not be able to attend if there are out-of-pocket costs involved.

  Businesses may be more willing to pay for CERT training because they can show a direct benefit to their operations. One community charged businesses for the training, explaining that this money would be used to support neighborhood training.

- **Solicit donations.** Some corporations, businesses, and service clubs have a history of supporting community programs and include it in their donations plan. Try to determine how CERT can benefit them and can fit into their donations plan before you approach them. The worst thing that can happen is that they will say no. When soliciting donations, ensure that you recognize business contributions on your website or in your newsletter. Talk with your budget person to see if monetary donation can be managed as a separate account for CERT within your department.

- **Solicit in-kind contributions.** Corporations may be more willing to donate materials or supplies for CERTs, rather than money. If this is the case, try to gain donations for items that are critical to the program. You will need hardhats, flashlights, batteries, rope, printing services, recharging of fire extinguishers, and a lot more. Offer attribution as a sponsor of CERT programs in exchange for the donation, and follow up with a formal thank you.

  Also, utility companies have a track record for providing the mockups you'll need to demonstrate how to turn off gas and electrical utilities. Approach your local utilities to explain your program. You might be surprised at what they'll offer. (They may also have supplemental training programs to offer your CERT graduates.)

- **Apply for a grant.** FEMA through the States is making grant funding available for local CERT training. If you are beginning a CERT in a school district, grant money may be available under the Federal "Safe Schools" program. Additionally, some corporations also offer grants for specific causes, including emergency preparedness. Remember, though, that grant funding is temporary. Even if you get a grant to get your program started, you will have to find a permanent source of funding for program maintenance.

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

How To: Ideas for Obtaining CERT Resources (Continued)

- **Establish a Not-For-Profit Organization.** Some CERTs have established themselves as not-for-profit organizations, which are also called 501c(3) organizations. Organizations need to complete and submit an application for 501c(3) status and, typically, CERTs that have done so, are well established rather than startup groups. However, if CERTs can be organized as 501c(3) organizations, they are able to raise funds through tax-deductible contributions from donors.

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

Starting a CERT Program - Step 2: Identifying Resources

CERT Program Personnel Resources

As the CERT Program Coordinator, you will not be able to make the program successful if you don't have help. To run a healthy, growing CERT program, you will need:

- Administrative assistance (You might check with groups, such as Senior Corps or AmeriCorps for volunteers).
- A cadre of well-qualified instructors.
- Volunteers who take responsibility for parts of the program.

Use this information to determine your personnel needs and decide how you will staff the program. Your CERT instructor cadre is another critical resource. The section titled "Establishing a Training Cadre" presents resources on recruiting, selecting, and preparing instructors.

CERT Program Coordinator

As the CERT Program Coordinator, you are responsible for the overall success of the program for your community. But what does a Program Coordinator do? Some of your key responsibilities are listed below. As you progress through program development and introduce program maintenance, you will identify other responsibilities. When you do, add them to this list as a reminder of what it takes to run a CERT program.

General Management

- Develop the initial plan for implementing a CERT program in the community.
- Develop forms and records or a database to track training, program participation, exercises, mailings, etc.
- Develop a budget and obtain funding.
- Maintain records (financial, inventory, database of CERT members, etc.).
- Coordinate a CERT electronic newsletter or other mailings to maintain contact with current CERT volunteers.
- Establish Standard Operating Procedures for the use of CERTs in disaster and nondisaster situations.
- Evaluate the overall program.

Marketing

- Gain support by marketing the plan to local leaders, unions, first responders, citizens, employers, and potential partners.
- Pitch to the media to gain public recognition of CERT capabilities and accomplishments.

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

CERT Program Personnel Resources (Continued)

Training

- Train administrative staff to handle public inquiries by phone and email about the program.
- Schedule training, follow-up training, exercises, special events, etc.
- Arrange all program logistics, including classroom setup.
- Identify, recruit, train, and schedule instructors.
- Recruit class participants.
- Maintain the course content.
- Provide an orientation at the beginning of each course (very important for new programs, less important in well-established programs).
- Monitor classroom delivery.
- Evaluate training and results.
- Arrange for speakers at graduation.
- Develop supplemental classes, exercises, and projects to keep CERT members involved and improve their skills.

Administrative Assistance (Paid or Volunteer)

CERT will generate a lot of telephone calls and a lot of paperwork. While you are marketing the program to key stakeholders and running classes, you will need someone reliable to assist you by:

- Answering telephone calls and responding to routine inquiries.
- Processing mailings.
- Processing registrations.
- Arranging the training logistics.
- Maintaining the CERT member database.
- Arranging for the printing of course materials, flyers, brochures, and other CERT materials.
- Helping with a newsletter and/or website.

You may be able to delegate other responsibilities. CERT members may have leadership, administrative, and creative talents that can help you. Remember, it is their program.

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

Starting a CERT Program - Step 2: Identifying Resources

Words of Advice: Tips for Obtaining Resources

Dale Kleos - Whatcom County, Washington
People, People, People

People, people, people — you need people to train, to organize, to carry out public relations. Every aspect of every little detail needs to be taken into account. Without committed community members the program won't get off the ground.

Rachel Jacky - Portland, Oregon
Everyone Who Has Something To Contribute

The same resources that are necessary to support a new CERT program are also necessary to sustain the program—the people, community members, program volunteers, emergency responders—everyone who has something to contribute.

For a new CERT program, you need two things:

- Enthusiastic community volunteers, and
- Enthusiastic trainers who will make the community volunteers feel like respected partners in disaster preparedness and response.

Any other resources (funding, political support, etc.) won't help much if you don't have committed volunteers and trainers.

Stew Anderson - Natrona County, Wyoming
Find a Champion

The most important things to get a program started is to have a champion to spearhead the program and the citizens wanting to do more for their community. Also it's important to have the necessary equipment to do effective training.

Joe Lowry - Memphis, Tennessee
It's a Team Effort

Number one is the people. People are needed to form the teams, to administratively support the program, to support the teams, to support the training, volunteers are needed to attend the training and be prepared to deal with events. We need people to plan in the event of an emergency, we need people to respond to an emergency, we need people to help those after an emergency.

The program cannot be carried out without a strong team of supporters. This includes everyone from the volunteers that make the coffee and checks the participants in to the businesses that financially support the program's efforts to the professionals that train the citizens and finally the citizens who get trained. It's all a team effort. One piece of the puzzle cannot be left undone.

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

Starting a CERT Program - Step 2: Identifying Resources

Resource Requirements Worksheet

Listed below are resources you will need to start your CERT program. You may identify others, especially if you speak with one of the CERT Program Coordinators, but this information will get you started.

Category	Items
Administrative Equipment & Supplies	❏ Classroom and Exercise Facilities
Course Materials	❏ Instructor Guides ❏ Student Manuals (1 per student)
Classroom Supplies	❏ Chart Paper ❏ Masking Tape ❏ Pencils/Pens ❏ Certificates of Completion ❏ Wallet Cards
Audio/Visual Equipment	❏ Computer (with PowerPoint 2000 software) ❏ Computer Projector ❏ VHS Player ❏ TV Monitor(s) ❏ Easel Stands
Fire Suppression Equipment	❏ Class A:B:C Fire Extinguishers (1 for every 5 students) ❏ Dry Chemical Fire Extinguisher (1) ❏ Fire Pan & Propane Tank ❏ Fire Suppression Supplies: ❏ Pyrex® Jar w/Lid (optional) ❏ Cotton Swabbing (optional) ❏ Wooden Matches ❏ Fire Pan ❏ Road Flares and Pole ❏ Propane Fuel
Medical Equipment	❏ Mannequin ❏ Blanket
Medical Supplies	❏ Examination Gloves ❏ Triangular Bandages ❏ 4" x 4" Bandages ❏ Towels ❏ Splints
Search and Rescue Supplies	❏ Blanket ❏ Pry Bar or Long 2 x 4 ❏ Jackets ❏ Wood (for leveraging and cribbing)

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

Starting a CERT Program - Step 2: Identifying Resources

Resource Requirements Worksheet (Continued)

Category	Items
Miscellaneous Supplies	❏ Hard Hats ❏ Vests ❏ Flashlights ❏ Work Gloves ❏ Goggles ❏ Other (List):
Training Props	❏ Mockups of utility (gas and propane) valves, breaker boxes, fuse boxes, etc. ❏ Other (List):
Personnel	❏ Firefighters ❏ EMTs or Paramedics ❏ Other (List):
Advertising Materials	❏ Registration Forms ❏ Flyers ❏ Other (List):
Information Management Tools	❏ Tools to track: ❏ Who takes the course ❏ When they graduate ❏ Refresher training and exercises ❏ How often CERTs are deployed

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

Starting a CERT Program - Step 2: Identifying Resources

Sample CERT Budget

The budget below is a sample of what your CERT budget might look like. Note that this budget is simplified, and your budget will be more complex than the budget shown.

Sample Annualized Costs

Halftime Coordinator	$24,000
Overtime for trainers (firefighters)	6,000
Postage and miscellaneous printing	2,750
	$32,750

Sample Costs Per Student

Helmet, vest, & badge	16
Training manual	2
300 graduates @ 18/ea.	$5,400

Total Sample Costs	**$38,500**
Total Sample Cost/Student	**$127**

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

Starting a CERT Program - Step 2: Identifying Resources

CERT Program Costs Worksheet

Use this worksheet to help create a budget for your CERT Program. An Excel Spreadsheet version of this tool is available on the website.

Item	Unit Cost	Number Needed	Subtotal	Total Cost
What Does Your Program Cost?				
1. Administrative Equipment & Supplies				
1.1 Administrative Facilities			$	
1.2 Classroom and Exercise Facilities			$	
				$
1.2 Course Materials				
1.2.1 Instructor Guides			$	
1.2.2 Participant Manuals (1 per student)			$	
				$
1.3 Classroom Supplies				
1.3.1 Chart paper			$	
1.3.2 Masking tape			$	
1.3.3 Pencils/pens			$	
1.3.4 Certificates of Completion			$	
1.3.5 Wallet Cards			$	
				$
1.4 Audio/Visual Equipment (List)				
1.4.1 Computer (with PowerPoint 2000 software)			$	
1.4.2 Computer Projector			$	
1.4.3 VHS Player			$	
1.4.4 TV Monitor(s)			$	
1.4.5 Easel Stands			$	
				$
TOTAL EQUIPMENT & SUPPLIES				**$**
2. Unit Equipment & Supply Requirements				
2.1 Fire Suppression Equipment				
2.1.1 Class A:B:C (1/ea. 5 students)			$	
2.1.2 Dry Chemical (1/ea.)			$	
2.1.3 Fire Pan & Propane Tank			$	
				$
2.2 Fire Suppression Supplies				
2.2.1 Pyrex® jar w/lid (optional)			$	
2.2.2 Cotton Swabbing (optional)			$	
2.2.3 Wooden Matches			$	
2.2.4 Fire Pan			$	
2.2.5 Road Flares			$	
2.2.6 Propane Fuel			$	
				$
2.3 Medical Equipment (List)				
2.3.1 Mannequin			$	
2.3.2 Blanket			$	
				$

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

Starting a CERT Program - Step 2: Identifying Resources

CERT Program Costs Worksheet (Continued)

Item	Unit Cost	Number Needed	Subtotal	Total Cost
What Does Your Program Cost?				
2.4 Medical Supplies				
2.4.1 Examination Gloves			$	
2.4.2 Triangular Bandages			$	
2.4.3 4" by 4" Bandages			$	
2.4.4 Towels			$	
2.4.5 Splints			$	
				$
2.5 Search and Rescue Supplies				
2.5.1 Blanket			$	
2.5.2 Pry Bar or Long 2 x 4			$	
2.5.3 Jackets			$	
2.5.4 Wood (for leveraging and cribbing)			$	
				$
2.6 Miscellaneous Supplies (List)				
2.6.1 Hard Hats			$	
2.6.2 Vests			$	
2.6.3 Flashlights			$	
2.6.4 Work Gloves			$	
2.6.5 Goggles			$	
2.6.6 Rope			$	
2.6.7 Other (List)			$	
				$
TOTAL EQUIP. & SUPPLY REQUIREMENTS				**$**
3. Training Props				
3.1 Mockup of utility (gas and propane) valves, breaker, fuse boxes, etc.				$
3.2 Other (List)				$
TOTAL PROPS				**$**
4. Personnel				
4.1 Firefighers				$
4.2 EMTs or Paramedics				
4.2.1 Coordinator			$	
4.2.2 Admin Assistant			$	
				$
4.3 Other (List)				$
TOTAL INSTRUCTORS				**$**

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

Starting a CERT Program - Step 2: Identifying Resources

CERT Program Costs Worksheet (Continued)

What Does Your Program Cost?				
Item	**Unit Cost**	**Number Needed**	**Subtotal**	**Total Cost**
5. Advertising Materials				
5.1 Registration Forms			$	
5.2 Flyers			$	
5.3 Other (List)			$	
TOTAL ADVERTISING MATERIALS				$
6. Information Management Tools to Track				
6.1 Who takes the course			$	
6.2 When they graduate			$	
6.3 Refresher training and exercises			$	
6.4 How often CERTs are deployed			$	
TOTAL INFO TOOLS				$
TOTAL COST PER DELIVERY				$
STUDENTS/YEAR				
TOTAL COST/PER STUDENT				$

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

Starting a CERT Program - Step 3: Gaining Support and Recruiting

Overview

Regardless of how well you organize your CERT program, it can't succeed unless you have the support of the key stakeholders in your community. These stakeholders range from the chief elected and appointed officials to professional responders to the citizens whom you want to recruit. This step presents some issues that you may need to address and provides suggestions for gaining the support of all program stakeholders.

Contents

This step includes the following resources:

- Developing Your Program Strategy
- Developing CERT Partnerships
- Developing Partnerships Checklist
- Marketing CERT
- Gaining Support From Local Leaders
- Tips for Gaining Support & Recruiting
- Marketing Contacts Worksheet

Web Resources

- Volunteer Recruitment: Tips From the Field, Texas Commission on Volunteerism and Community Service
  Web Address: http://www.txserve.org/mgmt/volrec/recruit.html

- Volunteer Recruitment Tips
  Web Address: http://www.cmsa.org/meminfo/VolunteerRecruitment.html

- Strategic Communications for Nonprofits: A Step-by-Step Guide to Working with the Media
  Web Address: http://www.benton.org/Practice/Features/stratcommrevw.html

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

How To: Developing Your Program Strategy

Before you begin marketing your CERT program, you will need to develop an overall strategy for the program.

Why Develop a Strategy Paper

Experienced CERT Program Coordinators suggest that a good way to develop the program strategy is by preparing a "white paper" that presents an overall approach to CERTs within the context of the community, its hazards, and its response requirements. After development, you can use the information from your "white paper" to market your program.

What To Include in Your Strategy Paper

The "white paper" should include the information listed below. As you consider your community's needs, you may find other topics that should be included in the "white paper" as well.

Topic	What To Include
Current Situation in the Community	- Threats faced by the community - Population needs - Number of professional responders - How CERTs can augment the response
Program Goals and Expectations	- An overview of what CERTs will do in an emergency or disaster - How CERTs will complement professional responders - How many people will be trained in the first year - An estimate of how many people will be trained over the first 5 years - How skill levels will be maintained
Training Strategy	- Training curriculum (Note: The FEMA curriculum can be augmented if the community faces additional threats to unusual conditions.) - Training methods
Team Organization	- Types of teams: Neighborhood teams, rural area teams, workplace teams, non-profit organization teams, and others - How ICS will be used to manage the CERT response
Linkages With the Existing Response System	- Protocols for "self-activation" and "call out" - Procedures for communicating with professional responders - Level of control by emergency responders

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

How To: Building CERT Partnerships

For your program to be successful, it will be critical for you to identify potential partners and to form and maintain partnerships.

Identifying the Benefits of Partnerships

In building these partnerships, it is important to determine how the features of the CERT program can benefit the stakeholders and the community. Potential benefits include:

- Better individual and family preparedness,
- Increased neighborhood and workplace involvement with public safety,
- Support of emergency management and its agencies,
- Businesses investment in community safety, or
- The positive perception that the government is reaching out to help the people it serves, etc.

Every member of the community—from private citizens to businesses to government officials—holds a vital stake in preparedness and response. As you build partnerships, you will gain knowledge and a better understanding of the risks affecting your community and the roles that CERT volunteers can play. Even better, you will identify and build resources as you meet knowledgeable and enthusiastic people, gain ideas, and obtain financial assistance.

Identifying Partners and Stakeholders

One of the most important steps you need to take is to identify key stakeholders in your community and recruit individuals, businesses, government officials, service groups, and others to support the CERT program. While every citizen is a potential stakeholder, some will be more willing or able to form partnerships than others.

Take some time to identify potential partners and stakeholders in your community. Some partners, such as homeowner's associations, Neighborhood Watch groups and school groups are "ready-made" partners. The Checklist for Developing Partnerships provides additional partnering suggestions, and you may add other potential partners to the list. After you have identified potential partners and stakeholders, review the questions that follow the checklist. It should get you started on assessing their stake in the CERT program.

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

How To: Building CERT Partnerships (Continued)

Recruiting Partners

Recruiting partners is like assembling a successful team—it takes thoughtful planning. Chances are that you will have only one opportunity to introduce CERT to many potential partners, so you will want your approach to be well thought out. There are ample materials and success stories available about CERT programs, especially if you network with other CERT Program Coordinators.

Emergency preparedness and response is not just an issue for public authorities or first responders. Disasters can occur unexpectedly and overwhelm the response system.

Your stakeholders will come from every segment of the community that can be impacted by a disaster. Recruiting these capable and committed individuals will be key. Let your own enthusiasm and commitment show. It will be contagious!

All partners will want to know how they will benefit from CERT and if the program has elements of success. After all, committing personal time and, perhaps, financial resources requires a full understanding of the importance of CERTs.

Because many of your potential partners will be community leaders who are constantly bombarded with requests for financial and personal support, anticipate the question, "What makes CERT so important?" Be sure to have a response ready, and share some success stories.

Schedule and Prepare for One-on-One Meetings

Schedule individual meetings with the organizations you have targeted for participation. Here's where you will need to give careful thought to your approach. Consider how the organization will benefit from participation. You may need to do some research into the organization to discover motivating factors and leveraging points, such as protection of future profits or safety of employees. For some, a connection with damage prevention may be obvious, and community goodwill is always an important motivating factor.

For neighborhood partners, you will need to learn about any specific hazards faced (is the neighborhood located along a stream that is prone to flooding, for example?) and the makeup of the neighborhood. Try to find a "champion" in the neighborhood who can promote the program to his or her neighbors.

After you have identified the factors you want to stress, develop talking points for one-on-one meetings. Be sure that you develop a clear message on why they should participate, what CERTs can accomplish if supported, and how they can help with the process.

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

How To: Building CERT Partnerships (Continued)

Bringing Partners to the Table

It is important that potential partners realize that beyond the basic training, CERT is a unique program that will be developed based on local needs, and that it is up to the partners to help create the strategy to implement a program that improves community preparedness. You can customize CERT materials to meet the community's specific hazards, demographics, and response needs.

Every community has dynamos in the public and private sector who can lead with powerful effectiveness. The job of recruiting partners will be ongoing, so keep notes of contacts you make and the possible resources they can provide. Also, as you recruit partners, encourage them to identify others who can contribute, personally or financially, to the program.

Developing Win-Win Relationships With Partners

In recruiting partners and forming partnerships, you're looking to build long-term relationships. Anything less will limit the program's effectiveness and increase its operational costs. You should have a clear vision of how your partners can help you in the short- and long-term development of the program.

To benefit your partners as well as your program, take advantage of each partner's normal function in the community. For instance, the media is constantly looking for good stories. The media has the potential to be of critical assistance in promoting the CERT program and community preparedness because:

- The community relies on TV, radio, and the press for news.
- The media has a responsibility for gathering and disseminating critical information to the community.
- Media personnel are part of the community that you are trying to prepare to protect.

Because the media can be a great way to disseminate information about the benefits of CERT, perhaps local stations or newspapers would be willing to broadcast or print program information and announcements. As a result, information about CERT is disseminated more widely and in a more sophisticated way, while the public receives correct information about the program.

Leveraging resources in similar ways with organizations, such as utility companies, hospitals, volunteer organizations, and educational institutions strengthens both the CERT program and the organizations. However, these partnerships involve a high-level, long-term commitment to the program. Your potential partners are investing time, experience, creativity, and money. True partners will embrace CERT and create momentum that inspires and encourages others to participate as well.

Besides financial and personal support for implementing the CERT program, businesses, media, neighborhood organizations, and public safety agencies benefit from the actual CERT program. Their families, loved ones, and employees receive the training that prepares them for hazards, which results in a long-term improvement in public safety.

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

Starting a CERT Program - Step 3: Gaining Support and Recruiting

Developing Partnerships Checklist

The list below provides some suggestions for developing CERT partners. Use this list to help you determine whom you should approach to sell your program.

Type of Organization	Contacts
Business and Industry	❏ Large employers ❏ Housing authorities ❏ Utility companies ❏ Other:
Communications/Media Organizations	❏ Telephone companies ❏ Television stations ❏ Radio stations ❏ Cable providers ❏ Daily and weekly newspapers ❏ Other:
Not-for-Profit Organizations	❏ Civic and service organizations ❏ Benevolent groups (e.g., Rotary, Kiwanis, Lions, Jaycees) ❏ Other:
Public Interest Groups	❏ The American Red Cross chapters ❏ Neighborhood Watch groups ❏ American Association of Retired Persons chapters ❏ Parent-teacher organizations ❏ Chambers of commerce ❏ Homeowners' associations ❏ Environmental groups ❏ Other:
Health Care Providers	❏ Hospitals ❏ Medical clinics ❏ Managed-care facilities ❏ Emergency medical services ❏ Other:
Local Government Agencies	❏ Local authorities ❏ Elected and appointed officials ❏ Police departments ❏ Fire departments ❏ Public works departments ❏ Planning and zoning boards ❏ Other:

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

Developing Partnerships Checklist (Continued)

Type of Organization	Contacts
Medical Supplies	❏ Union locals ❏ Professional groups ❏ Other:
Education Groups	❏ School superintendent ❏ School board members ❏ University and community colleges ❏ Vocational and technical schools ❏ Daycare, childcare, and elderly-care providers ❏ Other:

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

Starting a CERT Program - Step 3: Gaining Support and Recruiting

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Marketing CERT

In many communities, once started, CERT has sold itself as a valuable program. As a new CERT Program Coordinator, you need to determine how will you initially "sell" your program to local elected officials, employers, and citizens. As you consider the tips provided below, think about other ways that you might market the CERT program. For example, you should consider:

- What internal support is needed?
- What external support is needed?
- Are there ready made groups for this training?

Overall Marketing Steps

Listed below are suggested steps for marketing your CERT program:

- **Step 1: Identify Potential CERT Partners.** There are some "ready-made" partners for CERT in nearly every community. The groups listed below are good examples of "ready-made" CERT partners. (See the checklist for Developing Partnerships.)

  - Homeowner associations
  - Neighborhood associations
  - Communities of faith
  - Business district associations
  - Grange associations
  - Schools or PTAs
  - Scouting organizations
  - ARES/RACES/Amateur radio associations

  Identify the "ready-made" partners in your community. They may be perfect as model CERTs.

- **Step 2: Develop an Outreach Program.** After identifying audiences that could benefit from CERT training, figure out a way to reach them. Arrange to speak to potential audiences. Explain the issues involved in emergency response and explain how CERT training can improve preparedness and enable neighborhoods or workplaces to take care of themselves.

- **Step 3: Develop and Disseminate Marketing Materials.** Get your message out! Prepare media releases, distribute flyers in target neighborhoods, place articles in neighborhood association newsletters, or distribute information at community events. Think creatively about how to let your potential audience know that CERTs exist, what they do, and how to participate. Include a contact phone number or email address in case people have questions-and respond to inquiries promptly! When you do this, make sure the people who will receive these inquires know about CERT. If they do not handle the inquiries deftly, it will reflect badly on your program.

- **Step 4: Pitch to the Media.** Go public! Provide the media with footage or photo opportunities involving CERTs in action. Ask CERT volunteers to speak to the media about the benefits they've received through CERT training. Develop media releases that send the message about CERTs. Be prepared for the results of media coverage!

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

Marketing CERT (Continued)

Marketing CERT to Employers

Employers can be a huge asset to your CERT program. (Your "white paper" will be a critical tool for gaining the support you need.) Aside from the benefit of increased preparedness to the entire community, employers are a major source of contributions to CERT programs nationwide. To gain the support of employers in your community:

- **Arrange a Meeting.** Meeting with business leaders face to face shows your commitment to the CERT program. It also provides you with an opportunity to:

  - Identify potential threats to the community and the business.
  - Emphasize the benefits to both the community and the business.
  - Develop trust that a partnership with the CERT program will create benefits for them. For example, CERT may become part of their business continuity plan or may meet some of their OSHA requirements for training employees.

- **Conduct the Meeting.** When meeting with business leaders:

  - Spell out **what** you can offer them and **how** they can assist you.
  - Present a **complete** plan (your "white paper," including goals and objectives, the respective roles of all partners, your proposed timeline for implementing the program, and how business leaders can evaluate the benefits of the program).
  - Stress **what's in it for them**. Emphasize the benefits of increased preparedness and of having trained response teams onsite. Point out the benefits to the larger community as well. Bring examples of how CERTs have been used in the workplace to demonstrate your points.

  Remember, the end result must be tangible for you to gain corporate support.

- **Follow Up.** Send a letter to thank the business leaders for allowing you to speak to them. Use the thank you as an opportunity to market your key points one more time. Indicate a timeframe when you will contact them again to see how you can work together.

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

Marketing CERT (Continued)

Marketing CERT to Responders and Bargaining Unit Employees

In the past, there has been some misunderstanding of the CERT program by first responders and other bargaining unit employees. While these misunderstandings have not stopped CERT programs, it is good to be aware of the potential issues and address them early. Some tips for working with responders and other bargaining unit employees include:

- **Early Involvement.** It is important for responders and other bargaining unit employees to understand the strengths and limitations of CERTs and to be reassured that CERTs are not intended to take the place of trained first-response personnel. CERTs supplement their capability and can be a resource to them.

- **Continuous Involvement.** Provide courtesy copies of the CERT curriculum for review. Ask responders to provide feedback on the materials, and solicit suggestions for "customizing" the program to better meet the community's needs. Use response personnel as trainers and coaches during the training. Feedback from many CERT programs indicate that department personnel involvement during training is a very positive experience for participants and responders.

Marketing CERT to Citizens

If you have been approached by local employers or citizens' groups about establishing a CERT program, your marketing requirements may be limited. But if your community has little experience with CERT and is unaware of the benefits that CERTs can provide, you will need to market the program more intensely to these potential stakeholders. To gain the support and involvement of local employers and citizens:

- **Select "Pilot" Groups.** Review the demographics of your community to identify the employers and citizens' groups that you think would serve as the best models for CERT. Then, limit your initial marketing (you can expand your marketing later) to the leaders of these groups, expanding within the groups after you get "buy-ins" from the leaders. Members of these groups can join you after the training as spokespersons for the program.

- **Emphasize the Benefits of CERT.** Enabling private citizens or workplace teams to prepare for emergencies and take care of themselves is a powerful enticement for CERT. You may also identify other benefits for initiating a CERT program based on how CERTs will be used in your area. CERT participants:

  - Maintain a high level of home and workplace preparedness.
  - Are more informed about risks and vulnerabilities in the community or workplace.
  - Are committed to the safety and well-being of their neighbors or coworkers.
  - Increase the credibility of neighbor-to-neighbor information, which helps to limit rumors and directs energy toward a positive response.

  Be sure to stress that disasters can happen and that the government may not be able to meet their needs immediately, but that there is something that community members can do about it—they can become trained CERT volunteers.

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

Gaining Support From Local Leaders

Regardless of how you fund your program, the support of local elected and appointed officials will be necessary, even if only to support the time that you will spend as Program Coordinator. In most communities, however, you will need the support of local leaders prior to startup because, ultimately, local leaders control program funding.

To gain the support of local leaders, try the tips listed below:

- **Do your research first.** The more knowledgeable you are about CERTs, what they can do, how much they cost, and the benefits they can provide the community, the more credibility you will have with those who control the decisionmaking and the purse strings. Use the "white paper" you developed to support your program strategy as your basis to ensure that you can answer as many questions as possible about what CERTs can do for your community's response efforts. Provide several success stories about how CERTs have been used in other (preferably similar) communities.

- **Determine your approach.** As with nearly any program, CERT can be approached in terms of, "It's a real resource!" or "It's another new program!" Undoubtedly, the first approach will bring you more success. Be ready to provide examples of how CERTs supplement local response resources, and be prepared to explain how you can make that happen in your community.

- **Offer CERT as a potential resource for multiple agencies.** CERT personnel are able and willing to help in a variety of settings. Suggest that they can help with tasks, such as installing smoke detectors and batteries, providing medical assistance at local parades and community events, or helping staff fire safety awareness booths at fire station open houses. The more versatile you can show CERTs to be, the more likely it is that you'll gain approval for the program.

- **Keep elected officials in the loop.** Include local elected officials on emailing lists or newsletter mailing lists so that they are aware of what you're doing to make CERTs successful and how CERTs are benefiting the community. Keep them aware of the progress you're making—how many CERTs you've trained, how often they've been activated, and whether there's a backlog of requests for training—so that the program stays "on their desks." When your program demonstrates its worth, let the elected officials take the credit. Invite local elected officials and chief officers to hand out certificates at graduation. Look for opportunities to make elected officials a visible part of the program to the community.

Finally, if your CERT program is established but doesn't have the support from local leaders that it needs, try scheduling an exercise or other event to demonstrate how CERTs operate and the benefits that a CERT can offer to the community. Invite local officials to an exercise involving CERTs—or schedule an exercise in a public place that will gain the attention of the media.

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

Words of Advice: Tips for Gaining Support & Recruiting

Dale Kleos - Whatcom County, Washington
Get Buy In From Community Leaders

Get elected officials and businesses and industry leaders involved, get their buy in—civic organizations and other service organizations. Encompass as many groups as you can mobilize.

Joe Lowry - Memphis, Tennessee
Get Buy In From Emergency Operations Personnel

The emergency operations people in the community must be committed to making it happen. They've got to support the program. These are the experts and their support is essential.

Frank Lucier - San Francisco, California
Develop a White Paper

Develop a "White Paper" on the program. It's essentially a business plan for the first year or two. It should include an outline of the program, training goals, refresher and advanced training, CERT operational issues, CERT management issues, training issues specific to the community, and the financial costs associated with all this.

Rachel Jacky - Portland, Oregon
Have Enthusiastic Citizens Pitch CERT

Always try to "let your citizens do the talking." It works to have enthusiastic neighbors make the pitch about the CERT program. They simply have great credibility in recruiting their neighbors and friends. Citizens can advocate as well as, or better, than a bureaucrat can when trying to get support for the program from elected officials.

The single most effective technique for us has been to make the people who join the program responsible for recruiting others. Participants know from the start that it's their job to work with us to build their own team, and they are great recruiters.

They contact their own community groups (e.g., neighborhood associations) and make presentations or get announcements in the neighborhood newsletter. We provide support when needed—flyers, a display board that team members can check out for a neighborhood block party, etc. Sometimes the program coordinator attends a neighborhood meeting that team members have set up. But word-of-mouth, neighbor-to-neighbor, seems to work very well.

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

Words of Advice: Tips for Gaining Support & Recruiting (Continued)

Tom Weaver - Florida Division of Emergency Management
Expand Your Concept of Neighborhood

CERT Programs over the years have branched out from the traditional "neighborhood" oriented team to a variety of team orientations. Newer orientations include "Academic" CERT units, teams that are based in school systems. Florida has several approaches to "Academic" CERT units.

"Academic CERT" applies the sound principles of CERT to the "neighborhood" of the school environment. After all, schools represent large "neighborhood" clusters of students housed together five days a week that require disaster preparedness capabilities, response and recovery if disaster occurs during the school day.

Stew Anderson - Natrona County, Wyoming
Use the Media

When we recruit we run press releases, newspapers, local television and radio announcements. We also use ads at local movie theaters. However, the best advertising is word of mouth from previous students.

Joe Lowry - Memphis, Tennessee
Don't Overlook Any Group

When recruiting go to all the groups you can—there's no group that should be overlooked. These groups can include:

- Neighborhoods/homeowners' associations.
- Graduates of the citizens' fire and police academies.
- City and county employees.
- High-rise apartments and office buildings.
- The hotel/motel industry.
- Businesses/civic groups.
- Schools, religious groups, and retirement communities.
- Homes for the elderly.
- **Anywhere people live and work!**

Frank Lucier - San Francisco, California
Try Using Anything and Everything

It would be nice if there was one technique for recruiting, but there's not. Try using anything and everything. People come to the program for many different reasons. You have to appeal to them at every level you can. It's like advertising. The more they see and hear about CERT the better chance you have seeing them in one of your classes.

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

Starting a CERT Program - Step 3: Gaining Support and Recruiting

Marketing Contacts Worksheet

You may want to use a spreadsheet to help you track your marketing contacts. A sample spreadsheet is shown below.

CERT Marketing Contacts								
Last Name	**First Name**	**Organization**	**Street Address**	**City**	**Zip**	**Phone**	**Email**	**Meeting Date**
Gould	Alisa	Volunteer Alliance	123 Main Street	Riverside	12222	540-790-8321	Agould@va.org	03/21/03

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

Starting a CERT Program - Step 4: Acquiring Training Materials

Overview

The basic CERT Student Manual is provided in English and Spanish on the CERT website. There is, however, a broad range of support materials that you will need to conduct the CERT training. This step provides information about what you'll need.

Contents

This step includes the following resources:

- Building a Fire Pan
- Ideas for Obtaining CERT Resources
- Tips for Acquiring Training Materials
- CERT Resource Requirements Worksheet

Web Resources

- CERT Training Materials
  Web Address: http://training.fema.gov/emiweb/cert/mtrls.htm

- Supplemental Video Materials
  Web Address: http://training.fema.gov/emiweb/cert/certvidmat.htm

- NFPA Hazard Signage Set (704 Diamond)
  Web Address: http://www.nfpa.org/catalog/product.asp?category%5Fname=Hazardous+Materials&pid=SET128&src=catalog

- Supplemental Video Materials
  Web Address: http://training.fema.gov/emiweb/cert/certvidmat.htm

- Photographs of CERT Training
  Web Address: http://training.fema.gov/emiweb/cert/photos.htm

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

How To: Building a Fire Pan

This diagram illustrates how to construct a fire pan for use in training CERT volunteers.
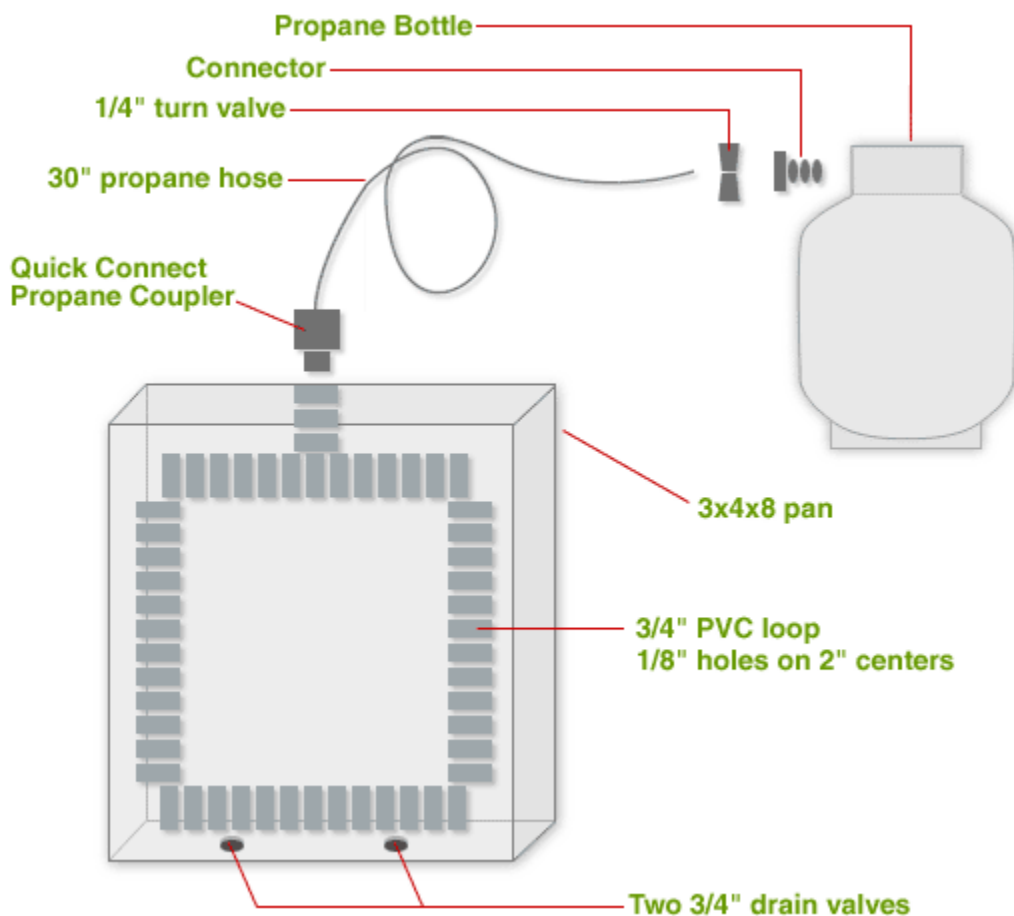
Caption: The graphic shows a propane bottle, connector, one-quarter-inch valve, 30 –inch propane hose, a quick connect propane coupler to a 3 by 4 by 8 pan. Inside the pan is a three-fourth-inch PVC loop with one-eighth hole on the 2-inch centers. At the bottom of the pan is two third-fourth drain valves.

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

Starting a CERT Program - Step 4: Acquiring Training Materials

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How To: Ideas for Obtaining CERT Resources

This job aid presents some sources of funding or in-kind contributions, in addition to agency support, that have been successful for CERT Program Coordinators. As you review the list, consider your community. You may identify other sources for the resources you need.

As you arrange for funding, remember that most communities will not establish a separate account for CERT funds. Be sure to check with the appropriate personnel locally to determine the process required to receive funding for the CERT program.

- **Request a line item in the community budget.** Communities that are committed to emergency preparedness and response may be able to support at least part of your program costs on a continuing basis.

- **Charge a fee.** Some communities charge a fee to cover the costs of their materials and equipment. While this is not the preferred method for funding CERT programs, it is a viable alternative in some communities. Be careful if you plan to develop CERTs in low-income areas. Many residents in low-income areas cannot afford to pay for a CERT program and will not be able to attend if there are out-of-pocket costs involved.

  Businesses may be more willing to pay for CERT training because they can show a direct benefit to their operations. One community charged businesses for the training, explaining that this money would be used to support neighborhood training.

- **Solicit donations.** Some corporations, businesses, and service clubs have a history of supporting community programs and include it in their donations plan. Try to determine how CERT can benefit them and can fit into their donations plan before you approach them. The worst thing that can happen is that they will say no. When soliciting donations, ensure that you recognize business contributions on your website or in your newsletter.

- **Solicit in-kind contributions.** Corporations may be more willing to donate materials or supplies for CERTs, rather than money. If this is the case, try to gain donations for items that are critical to the program. You will need hardhats, flashlights, batteries, rope, printing services, recharging of fire extinguishers, and a lot more. Offer attribution as a sponsor of CERT programs in exchange for the donation, and follow up with a formal thank you.

  Also, utility companies have a track record for providing the mockups you'll need to demonstrate how to turn off gas and electrical utilities. Approach your local utilities to explain your program. You might be surprised at what they'll offer. (They may also have supplemental training programs to offer your CERT graduates.)

- **Apply for a grant.** FEMA is making grant funding available to States for local CERT training. If you are beginning a CERT in a school district, grant money may be available under the Federal "Safe Schools" program. Additionally, some corporations also offer grants for specific causes, including emergency preparedness. Remember, though, that grant funding is temporary. Even if you get a grant to get your program started, you will have to find a permanent source of funding for program maintenance.

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

How To: Ideas for Obtaining CERT Resources (Continued)

- ▪ **Establish a Not-For-Profit Organization.** Some CERTs have established themselves as not-for-profit organizations, which are also called 501c(3) organizations. Organizations need to complete and submit an application for 501c(3) status and, typically, CERTs that have done so, are well established rather than startup groups. However, if CERTs can be organized as 501c(3) organizations, they are able to raise funds through tax-deductible contributions from donors.

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

Words of Advice: Tips for Acquiring Training Materials

Frank Lucier - San Francisco, California
Be Creative

When we first started we borrowed almost everything from the local firehouse. We would pick it up before class and return it immediately after. Either that or the instructors brought things from home. For cribbing materials we used wood from an old deck that I had replaced in my back yard. Bottom line: it's nice to have new things but be creative when you start out.

Stew Anderson - Natrona County, Wyoming
Identify Your Resource Needs

Begin by identifying the resources you'll need. Typical CERT resources include:

- A comfortable training room.
- An outdoor training facility.
- A computer with PowerPoint and a projector.
- FEMA student manuals.
- Hands-on equipment such as first-aid equipment, cribbing supplies, blocks of concrete, etc.
- Safety equipment for the students such as helmets, goggles, masks, vests, etc.

Joe Lowry - Memphis, Tennessee
Develop Handouts

The FEMA training material covers all the essential skills a CERT needs. With a bit of tailoring to address local hazards and communities, the materials work well.

In addition to the training materials, we use handouts covering everything that we want the people to know something about.

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

Starting a CERT Program - Step 4: Acquiring Training Materials

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Resource Requirements Worksheet

Listed below are resources you will need to start your CERT program. You may identify others, especially if you speak with one of the CERT Program Coordinators, but this information will get you started.

Category	Items
Administrative Equipment & Supplies	❏ Classroom and Exercise Facilities
Course Materials	❏ Instructor Guides ❏ Student Manuals (1 per student)
Classroom Supplies	❏ Chart Paper ❏ Masking Tape ❏ Pencils/Pens ❏ Certificates of Completion ❏ Wallet Cards
Audio/Visual Equipment	❏ Computer (with PowerPoint 2000 software) ❏ Computer Projector ❏ VHS Player ❏ TV Monitor(s) ❏ Easel Stands
Fire Suppression Equipment	❏ Class A:B:C Fire Extinguishers (1 for every 5 students) ❏ Dry Chemical Fire Extinguisher (1) ❏ Fire Pan & Propane Tank ❏ Fire Suppression Supplies: ❏ Pyrex® Jar w/Lid (optional) ❏ Cotton Swabbing (optional) ❏ Wooden Matches ❏ Fire Pan ❏ Road Flares and Pole ❏ Propane Fuel
Medical Equipment	❏ Mannequin ❏ Blanket
Medical Supplies	❏ Examination Gloves ❏ Triangular Bandages ❏ 4" x 4" Bandages ❏ Towels ❏ Splints
Search and Rescue Supplies	❏ Blanket ❏ Pry Bar or Long 2 x 4 ❏ Jackets ❏ Wood (for leveraging and cribbing)

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

Starting a CERT Program - Step 4: Acquiring Training Materials

Resource Requirements Worksheet (Continued)

Category	Items
Miscellaneous Supplies	❏ Hard Hats ❏ Vests ❏ Flashlights ❏ Work Gloves ❏ Goggles ❏ Other (List):
Training Props	❏ Mockups of utility (gas and propane) valves, breaker boxes, fuse boxes, etc. ❏ Other (List):
Personnel	❏ Firefighters ❏ EMTs or Paramedics ❏ Other (List):
Advertising Materials	❏ Registration Forms ❏ Flyers ❏ Other (List):
Information Management Tools	❏ Tools to track: ❏ Who takes the course ❏ When they graduate ❏ Refresher training and exercises ❏ How often CERTs are deployed

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

Starting a CERT Program - Step 5: Tailoring Training

Overview

The basic CERT training materials use an all-hazards approach and are intended for a national audience. All CERTs should receive training in the skills contained in the basic program. However, some of the information may not be relevant to your area. As the CERT Program Coordinator, you should tailor these materials by:

- Substituting photographs about your local hazards and your CERTs performing skills.
- Teaching local protocols. Because teams are local resources, they need to interact effectively with local agencies using local standards and protocols.

Contents

This step includes the following resources:

- Reviewing the CERT Content
- Hiding PowerPoint Visuals
- Changing the Master Slide
- Reviewing CERT Activities
- Updating CERT Materials
- Inserting Photos Into PowerPoint
- Tips for Using Photographs
- Revising the Word Files
- Keeping Your Instructors Current
- Tips for Tailoring Training
- Supplemental Video Materials
- Photographs of CERT Training

Web Resources

- Supplemental Video Materials
  Web Address: http://training.fema.gov/emiweb/cert/certvidmat.htm

- Photographs of CERT Training
  Web Address: http://training.fema.gov/emiweb/cert/photos.htm

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

Starting a CERT Program - Step 5: Tailoring Training

How To: Reviewing the CERT Content

It is important that you review the basic CERT materials carefully both to familiarize yourself with the course content and to identify areas that require tailoring for your program. Make sure to review both the Instructor Guide and the Participant Manual.

Step 1: Review the Course Overview

The Course Overview will provide you with general information about the CERT program and the materials. Review this section carefully to ensure that you understand the CERT concept fully and gain some ideas about how to implement CERTs in your community.

Step 2: Review Unit 1 — Emergency Preparedness

Unit 1: Emergency Preparedness sets the context for the remainder of the CERT program. The unit includes a general description of the CERT program, together with preparedness and response information for a wide array of potential hazards (included as appendices to the unit). Some of the hazards included in these sections may not present a risk in your area, so you will want to review them carefully and use only the information about those hazards that present a threat. As you review Unit 1:

❏ **Review the Objectives, Scope, and Methodology** to gain a quick overview of what will be presented and the general flow of the unit.

❏ **Review the unit content** carefully.

❏ **Mark your changes** directly in the Instructor Guide so that you know what you need to change in the electronic files.

❏ **Identify local examples** that will add interest to the material.

❏ **Review all activities** to:

  ❏ Determine whether they meet your program's needs.

  ❏ Determine how the activities must be conducted and managed in your community.

  ❏ Verify equipment requirements.

After reviewing the entire unit, **return to the time plan and visualize the flow**. Given the changes you've marked:

❏ Can the material be presented in the time allotted?

❏ Does the material meet your program needs?

❏ Do you have questions about any of the unit content? If so, write them down. Contact another CERT Program Coordinator or the FEMA CERT Program Coordinator for advice.

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

How To: Hiding PowerPoint Visuals

As you reviewed the CERT course materials, you undoubtedly identified visuals that do not relate to the hazards faced in your community. You will not want to show these slides during your course presentation, but deleting them will make the numbering inconsistent with those in the Instructor Guide and Participant Manual.

Follow the steps below to hide the PowerPoint visuals that you do not want to show without damaging the integrity of the overall presentation.

1. Open the PowerPoint presentation you wish to change.
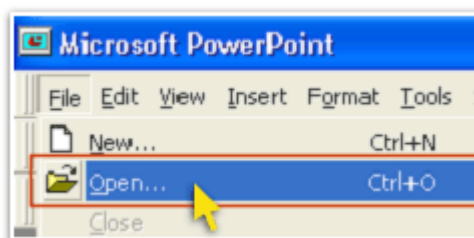
2. Left click "Slide Sorter View" at the bottom left corner of the screen.
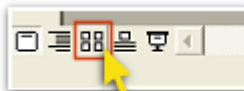
3. Left click once on the first slide you wish to hide.
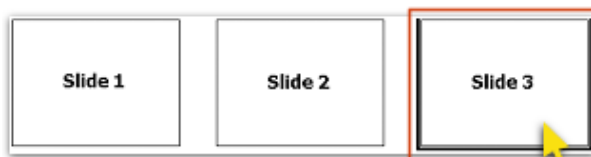
4. Click "Hide Slide" at the top of the screen. That slide will **not** be shown during your presentation.
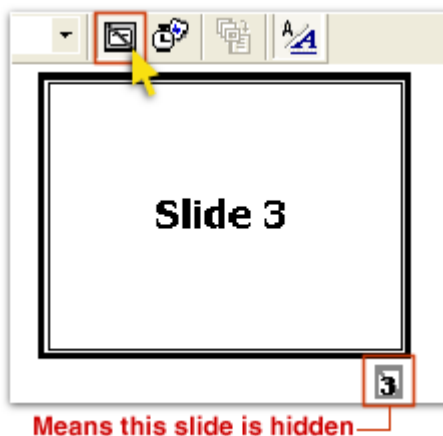
Repeat steps 3 and 4 for each slide you wish to hide.

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

How To: Changing the Master Slide

The PowerPoint presentations for the CERT program have been developed using a slide master to ensure consistency in color, layout, point size, bullets, and font. If you want to change the color, point size, bullets, or font on all of the slides in a PowerPoint presentation, you should change the master slide. Changing the master slide is easier for you and ensures that your presentation will be consistent and professional.

Follow the steps below to change the master slide in PowerPoint presentations:

1. Open the PowerPoint presentation you wish to change.
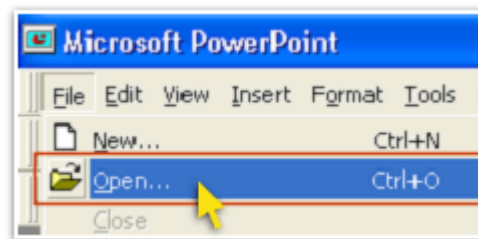
2. Left click "View" at the top of the screen.
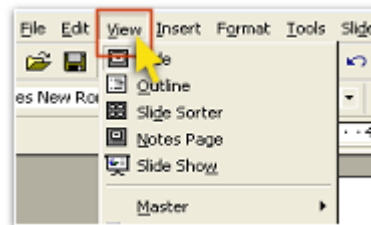
3. Left click "Master."

4. Left click "Slide Master" to see the master slide layout.
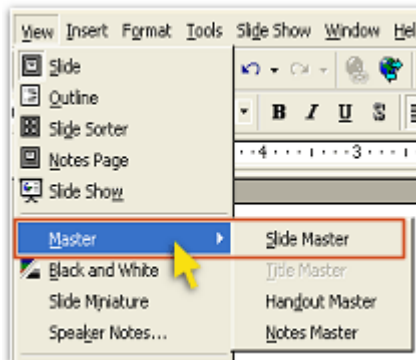
CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

How To: Changing the Master Slide (Continued)

5. Click on the area of the slide that you wish to change to make your changes on the master slide.
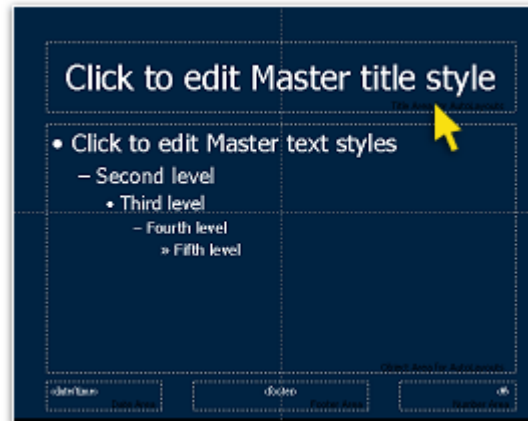
6. When finished, click on the "close" button at the top of the screen. Your changes to the master slide will be incorporated on every slide in the presentation.
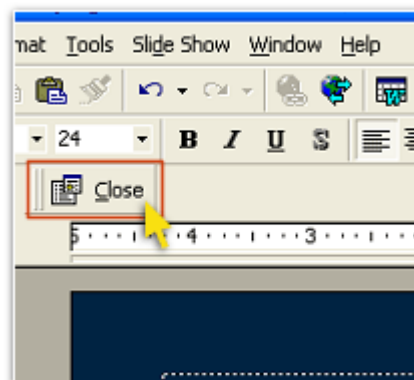
It is recommended that you review the entire slide presentation following any changes to the master slide to ensure that you have not changed something that interferes with the presentation of some, but not all, of the slides. Also, if you change the background or text colors, review the presentation to ensure that the slides project well and are readable in the new colors.

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

Reviewing CERT Activities

Before you deliver the CERT training for the first time, you will need to review all of the CERT course materials carefully. One area that will require your particular attention is the activities. Follow the steps below to ensure that you understand the concept behind each CERT activity— and to ensure that you have the equipment and facilities to conduct the activities safely.

- Review the Unit Objectives for the activities you are reviewing.
- Read the activity purpose statement to ensure that you understand the activity concept.
- Read each of the steps in the activity to ensure that you understand the intended flow.
- Review all scenarios and supplemental materials, if any, for the activity.
- Identify all special materials and equipment required for the activity.
- Consider your program, instructors, and facility limitations. Then answer the questions below:

  - ❏ Do you understand the intent of this activity and why it is in this section?
  - ❏ Do you understand how this activity fits into your planned CERT response in a disaster event?
  - ❏ Do you understand how the activity is supposed to work?
  - ❏ Do you understand what the participants will learn and apply through the activity?
  - ❏ Do you have all of the equipment and materials required to complete this activity safely and as described?
  - ❏ Will your instructors understand the intent of the activity or will they require additional input from you?
  - ❏ Can you safely conduct the activity, without modification, given the constraints of your facility?

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

Updating CERT Materials

The CERT classroom materials were last updated by FEMA during the fall of 2002. The materials are intended to provide the basic content for CERT programs nationwide.

Because of the range of hazards and vulnerabilities across the United States—and because communities have developed their own protocols and procedures—you may need to revise the national materials so that they align more closely to your program. Update CERT materials to:

- Add hazards that are not included in the national materials, provide supplemental information about hazards that are included, or to delete hazards for which your community is not at risk.
- Add local case studies and success stories.
- Add photographs that are meaningful to your audience.
- Change activities to tailor them to your community.
- Reflect local protocols, procedures, and terminology (e.g., triage terminology) to align them with what local responders follow or use.
- Provide handouts with additional information that is specific to the community.

Text documents for CERT have been developed using Word 2000® and are available on the CERT website in both Word and .pdf formats. If you need to update the materials, be sure to download the Word version. Visuals have been developed using PowerPoint 2000®.

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

How To: Inserting Photos Into PowerPoint

You may wish to add photographs to some of the PowerPoint visuals, to make them more visually interesting or to add immediacy to the presentation. To add a photograph to a PowerPoint visual:

1. Open the PowerPoint presentation you wish to change.
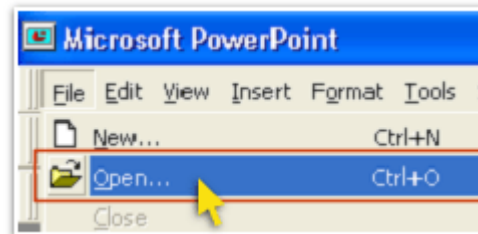
2. Left click "Slide Sorter View" at the bottom left corner of the screen.
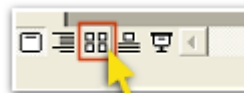
3. Left click twice to select the slide to which you will add the photograph.

4. Left click "insert" at the top of the screen.

5. Highlight picture.

6. Left click on "From File."
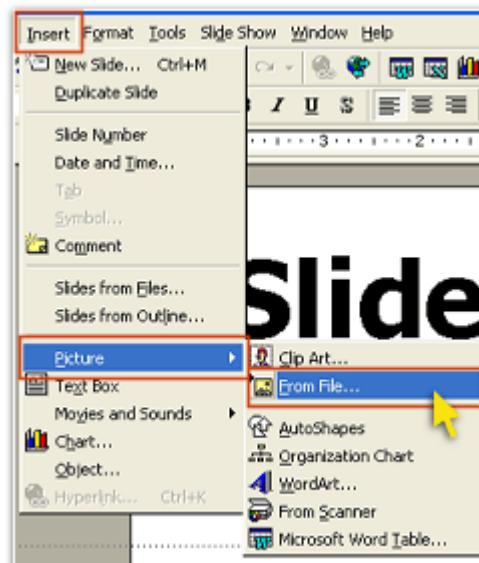
CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

How To: Inserting Photos Into PowerPoint (Continued)

7. Locate the photo and left click to highlight the file name.

8. When you have located the file, left click on the Insert button.
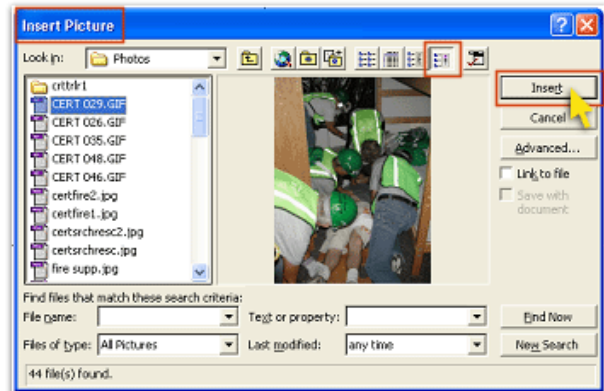
To edit the photo:

1. Left click once on the photo image.

2. Right click to access the pull-down menu.

3. Select "Format Picture."
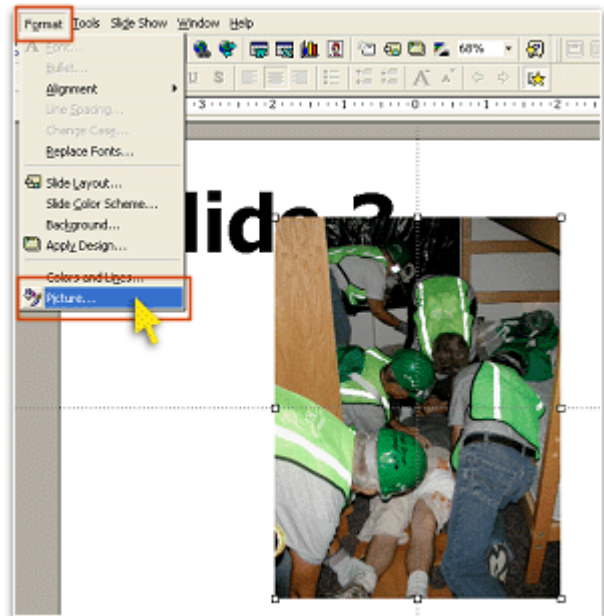
CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

How To: Inserting Photos Into PowerPoint (Continued)

4. Select "Size."

5. Ensure that "Lock Aspect Ratio" is checked. If not, click that box.

6. Click "Height," and type the percentage change (larger or smaller) for the photo.

7. Tab to "Width." The percentage should change automatically to keep the aspect ratio correct.

8. Click "OK." You photograph will resize by the percentage you requested.
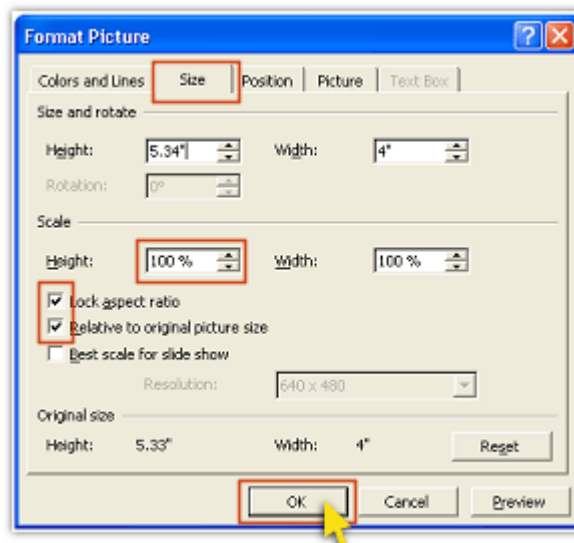
CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

Starting a CERT Program - Step 5: Tailoring Training

Tips for Using Photographs

There are several important factors to keep in mind when adding photographs to the PowerPoint slides.

- **Use photographs in .jpg format.** .jpg files are smaller in size and will help to keep your PowerPoint presentation smaller. Using files that are formatted as .bmp or .tif will increase your file size dramatically and may cause operational problems when you run the slide show.

- **Don't use too many.** Unless you have the expertise to use photo-editing software to reduce the file size of the photos you use, you will see that your PowerPoint file will become very large, very quickly. If you use too many photographs, your PowerPoint file will become so large that it will cause the computer to operate very slowly or to freeze.

- **Don't "clutter" the slide.** Aside from making your file size unwieldy, too many photos on a single slide can become clutter and destroy the effect you're trying to make.

- **Don't overshadow the text message.** While there may be nothing better to emphasize a point, photographs should always support the text message, not overshadow it. Size your photographs appropriately so that the message of the visual remains clear to the student.

- **Think before adding photographs to the Word file.** The visuals in the Word files (both Instructor Guide and Participants Manual) currently meet the requirements for accessibility to the disabled, as required under Section 508 of the Americans with Disabilities Act. If you add photographs to the visuals in the Word files (or anywhere else in the Word files, for that matter), you must include captions describing the photos to remain compliant. Also, photos will increase the file size and may not reproduce well when you copy the training materials.

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

Starting a CERT Program - Step 5: Tailoring Training

Revising the Word Files

> As you update the CERT materials, you will want to update the Instructor Guide and Participant Manual to ensure that they are consistent with the message your instructors present and to make them specific to your community's program. Revising the Instructor Guide and Participant Manual can be very easy if you take a few precautions.

Tips for Revising Word Files

- **Always revise with the "paragraph" symbols visible.** The "paragraph" symbol will be located at the top of your screen if you have the Standard toolbar turned on. If you cannot find the icon, click "View," then "Toolbars" to ensure that the Standard toolbar is turned on.
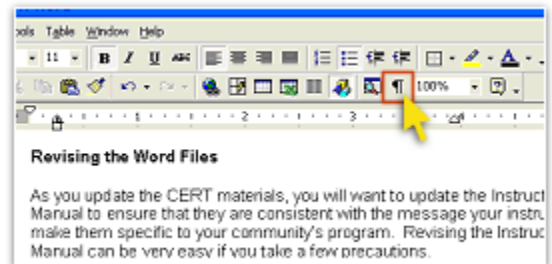
  While you may find these symbols annoying for routine work, they are important when revising the course materials because, along with hard returns, you will also be able to view page breaks and, more importantly, section breaks.

- **Don't delete section breaks.** The page headers and footers are linked to section breaks. If you delete a section break, the header and footer may become incorrect. If you inadvertently delete a section break, click the "undo" button at the top of the screen immediately.

- **Think before adding photographs to the Word file.** The visuals in the Word files (both Instructor Guide and Participants Manual) currently meet the requirements for accessibility to the disabled, as required under Section 508 of the Americans with Disabilities Act. If you add photographs to the visuals in the Word files (or anywhere else in the Word files, for that matter), you must include captions describing the photos to remain compliant. Also, photos will increase the file size and may not reproduce well when you copy the training materials.

- **Don't use macros.** Macros are a great way to save keystrokes but leave your files susceptible to macro viruses. It's better to use more keystrokes.

- **Just type the changes.** The basic formatting for the Word files is coded in the documents themselves. Headers will be available to you by clicking on the "style" pop-down menu at the top of your screen. If you are not adding a header, your computer will default to the "Normal" style.

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

Revising the Word Files (Continued)

To Update Word Documents

- Open the document that you wish to update.

- Scroll or use CTRL + PAGE DOWN to find the area of the text you wish to change.

- To add text, left click at the point of insertion and type the text.

- To delete text, use the mouse to highlight the text that you wish to delete. Then, press DELETE. If you accidentally delete something that you want to remain in the text, click the undo icon at the top of the screen.

- If you wish to add an icon in the left column, just find that icon anywhere in the document. Copy it, and paste it where you want it.

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

Starting a CERT Program - Step 5: Tailoring Training

Keeping Your Instructors Current

As you update the CERT materials, you will need to establish a way to keep your instructors current on the revised materials. How you approach instructor currency will depend on you and how you work with your instructors. Some suggestions from experienced CERT Program Coordinators for keeping instructors current are listed below.

- Type revisions to the Instructor Guide in **bold** to make them stand out to the instructors.
- Provide a synopsis of program revisions by email or CD.
- Conduct a briefing with instructors to go over the revisions before the first session of each class.

Even if you have not updated the materials, if you don't offer CERT courses regularly, or if you have a large cadre of instructors, you may need to ensure that they remain current on the materials. One way to ensure currency is to require each instructor to train at least once on a regular basis. (Initially, keep your instructor cadre small so that you can schedule instructors more frequently. As your program grows, these instructors will become the core of your cadre.)

Another is to plan regular meetings with your instructor cadre to cover program content, logistics, and training techniques.

You may have other ways that have worked to keep your instructors current. Continue to use them, and share them with others.

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

Words of Advice: Tips for Tailoring Training

Stew Anderson - Natrona County, Wyoming
Not All Communities Are the Same

The most beneficial training we offer is the basic CERT class itself because that has made most of the folks hungry for further classes.

It's important to remember that not all communities have the same types of hazards that affect them so you want to be hazard-specific to your area. Also your resources are not the same nationwide.

Joe Lowry - Memphis, Tennessee
People Relate to Local Examples

The CERT training materials provided are good but you also need to add quite a bit of local information. This is necessary so people can relate to the information being presented.

Rachel Jacky - Portland, Oregon
Absolutely Localize Training

The off-the-shelf training materials are good but you have to localize the FEMA curriculum to feature your community's hazards and vulnerabilities.

Frank Lucier - San Francisco, California
Tailor Both to the Community and Audience

I feel that the initial CERT training is the most critical and beneficial. That's when you get them in the door. If it isn't effective and enjoyable for the participants, you have lost them forever.

Training should be tailored to the threats faced by the community. Second, it should be tailored not just to the community but the audience. All communities have different communities within them. Faith-based groups are different from neighborhood groups which are different from workplace groups which are different from school groups. To be effective when the disaster strikes the training should fit the group, not the group fit the training.

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

Starting a CERT Program - Step 6: Establishing a Training Cadre

Overview

The initial success of your program will depend on the quality of the basic classroom instruction. To ensure that your program is successful, you will need to establish a cadre of qualified trainers. The number of trainers will depend on the size of your program and the frequency of your training. Regardless of the size of your cadre, all instructors must be qualified. This step will help you identify instructors and establish standards so that all instructors present—and represent—your program well.

Contents

This step includes the following resources:

- Selecting Instructors
- Establishing Instructor Standards
- Preparing Instructors
- Tips for Establishing a Training Cadre
- Sample Instructor Background Questionnaire

Web Resources

- Training Presentation Fundamentals
  Web Address: http://www.presentersonline.com/training/train_delivery.html

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

Starting a CERT Program - Step 6: Establishing a Training Cadre

How To: Selecting Instructors

Importance of Selecting Qualified Instructors

Students regularly rate the quality of instruction as more important to meeting their overall learning goals than any other factor. Students pay attention to the instructors more than to print materials or media.

The quality of the instructors you select will have more to do with the initial success or failure of your program than anything else. So, you will need to select your instructor cadre carefully and train them so that they are able to present the course in a way that relates to the students.

Most agencies that sponsor CERTs use internal resources to teach at the start of the program. However, a challenge faced by many CERT Program Coordinators is whether to enlist those who are interested (such as CERT graduates) to augment or replace subject-matter experts (such as professional firefighters or EMTs) as instructors. There are advantages and challenges associated with each. These advantages and challenges are shown in the table below.

Regardless of the decision you make about the types of instructors to recruit and train, all should:

- Be interested and enthusiastic about the CERT concept.
- Be able to make the training hands-on and fun.
- Enjoy working with people.
- Teach to the training and program objectives.
- Know how their session fits into the other sessions and the program.

Factors To Consider

Review the following lists of advantages and challenges to help you make decisions about the types of instructors to select.

First Responders as CERT Trainers	
Advantages	**Challenges**
▪ Have first-response experience	▪ May be uncertain about CERTs
▪ May have training experience	▪ May not have training experience
▪ Makes quality control easier	▪ Cost more than CERT volunteers
▪ Are reliable	▪ Tell "war" stories
▪ Work set schedules	▪ May go into too much detail for training objective
▪ Have credibility	
▪ Develop a relationship between the participants and the department	

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

Starting a CERT Program - Step 6: Establishing a Training Cadre

How To: Selecting Instructors (Continued)

CERT Graduates as Trainers	
Advantages	**Challenges**
▪ Are familiar with CERT operations ▪ May have training experience ▪ Must fit CERT around work responsibilities ▪ Cost less than professional responders	▪ May not have the level of expertise that first-responders do ▪ May cause issues with professional responders who feel that CERT graduates are taking their jobs ▪ Cannot answer what-if questions

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

How To: Establishing Instructor Standards

After selecting the instructors for your program, you will need to ensure that all instructors fully understand the materials and are equally qualified to present the training. Some ideas for establishing instructor standards are included below.

- **Review your cadre's professional background.** Most professional firefighters have been trained in emergency medical procedures and team organization and have at least some familiarity with disaster psychology. Others may have search and rescue experience. Civilian trainers may have even greater gaps in their knowledge of emergency operations. Review the professional background for each of your instructors and identify gaps in their background that must be filled prior to presenting the training.

- **Review your cadre's training background.** Virtually everyone has received some type of training, but not everyone can present training in a way that is engaging for the audience. Even trainers who have a lot of experience may not be able to train every topic with the same degree of thoroughness. Ask each potential instructor to provide his or her training background, and review the information carefully so that you can identify where you may need to build in some training "skills" sessions for instructors.

- **Develop an instructor "deployment" strategy.** Decide if you want all instructors to be able to train all CERT topics or if you want them to specialize. There are advantages and challenges associated with either strategy.

  - If you have the luxury of being able to select your instructors from among a group of experts in each CERT area, you may be able to focus your efforts on presentation skills only.

  - Requiring all instructors to be able to train the entire program will be more difficult for you but may benefit the program if an instructor becomes suddenly ill. Also, having instructors cross-trained in different modules will give you more flexibility in scheduling.

- **Develop a train-the-trainer strategy.** This strategy should be based on the instructors' backgrounds and your instructor deployment strategy. Some CERT Program Coordinators follow a train-the-trainer strategy of requiring observation, then gradually integrating the new instructor into the training. Others have developed a more formal train-the-trainer program that provides skills updates and training on presentation skills and techniques.

- **Implement your strategy.** Do a trial run of your program with the instructors conducting the training to each other and to you. Get feedback from all involved about how well they think the program worked and what could be improved for the future. Incorporate the feedback session into your overall train-the-trainer program.

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

Starting a CERT Program - Step 6: Establishing a Training Cadre

How To: Preparing Instructors

Even if the instructors you select are experienced, you should meet with them as a team to help them see the big picture and their role in it. If you are an experienced instructor or Program Coordinator, you may have other techniques that you use to train instructors. Don't feel constrained by these suggestions. You know your program and instructors better than anyone!

Training the Trainers

Experienced CERT Program Coordinators have been successful in training their instructors using the steps listed below.

- **Step 1:** Provide an orientation to the CERT program and to the training.
- **Step 2:** Allow new instructors time to review the materials carefully.
- **Step 3:** If just starting, do a dry run of the training.
- **Step 4:** Require new instructors to observe the training.
- **Step 5:** Schedule a practice session for new instructors to present the session that they will train to the Program Coordinator and other instructors.
- **Step 6:** Require new instructors to co-train with an experienced instructor.

Feedback at every point in this process is critical to developing good instructors. Be sure that all instructors are aware of your expectations for them and for the training. Provide constructive critique of training skills, and incorporate lessons learned into future classes.

Monitoring Training

The program manager should monitor training to guard against:

- Instructors covering material in far greater depth than the Instructor Guide.
- Telling too many "war" stories.
- Skipping hands-on training.

By using this structured approach, you will ensure that your instructors are:

- Familiar will all of the sessions.
- Have agreement on standards and protocols being taught.
- Use basic instructional skills, including how to engage the group, questioning techniques, and how to make the training interesting.

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

Starting a CERT Program - Step 6: Establishing a Training Cadre

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Words of Advice: Establishing a Training Cadre

Dale Kleos - Whatcom County, Washington
Develop a Training Plan

Having a plan for training your CERT trainers is important. Some of our volunteers are sent to EMI and we also have an in-house train-the-trainer program.

Rachel Jacky - Portland, Oregon
Use Local Resources

We offer train-the-trainer directly through the Portland fire department.

Joe Lowry - Memphis, Tennessee
Form Partnerships

One way to build a cadre is through establishing partnerships. We partner with our local fire department because they are experts on much of the emergency information.

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

Starting a CERT Program - Step 6: Establishing a Training Cadre

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Sample Instructor Background Questionnaire

You may want to use a questionnaire to gather information about potential instructors. A sample questionnaire is shown on the next page.

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

Starting a CERT Program - Step 6: Establishing a Training Cadre

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Sample Instructor Background Questionnaire

CERT INSTRUCTOR BACKGROUND QUESTIONNAIRE

Name:

Address:	**Work Phone:**
	Home Phone:
	Fax:
Employer:	**Email Address: (if available)**

PLACE A CHECK NEXT TO ALL AREAS THAT YOU HAVE PAST EXPERIENCE.

☐ CERT Program

☐ Fire safety and fire suppression

☐ Hazardous materials safety

☐ Emergency medical triage & treatment

☐ Search & rescue techniques and markings

☐ Incident Command System (ICS) operations

☐ Disaster psychology

☐ Exercise controller

☐ Other: (List)

Please list your past training presentation experience.

Place a check next to all areas that you wish to be considered for.

☐ Lead Instructor

☐ Co-Instructor for:

    ☐ Emergency Preparedness

    ☐ Fire Safety/Hazardous Materials

    ☐ Emergency Medical Operations

☐ Exercise Safety Officer

☐ Light Search and Rescue

☐ Disaster Psychology

Your Signature:	**Date:**

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

Starting a CERT Program - Step 7: Delivering Training

Overview

Delivering training requires much more than merely "presenting" the training. Training delivery requires that all of the students are registered, tracking systems are in place, materials are copied, equipment is purchased, facilities are arranged, and instructors are trained and ready to go. This step will provide you with several resources and sample documents that will help you prepare for and deliver the training.

Contents

This step includes the following resources:

- Delivering CERT Training
- Tips for Delivering CERT Training
- Sample Registration Form
- Sample Program Flyer
- Sample Training Record
- Sample Training Evaluation Form

Web Resources

- Training Presentation Fundamentals
  Web Address: http://www.presentersonline.com/training/train_delivery.html

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

How To: Delivering CERT Training

If you have delivered CERT training for the first time in your community, you understand how critical that initial delivery is. If you are getting ready to deliver CERT training for the first time, you may want to review the following advice from experienced CERT Coordinators.

Overall Tips

- **Start slowly.** Don't take too much on in the beginning. Identify a target audience and deliver the training to that group. Then, evaluate the training and deliver it again before opening the program to the larger community.

- **Allow plenty of lead time.** You will have a lot of logistical arrangements to make before you're ready to deliver CERT for the first time. Be sure to allow enough lead time for the first delivery to ensure that your training is not affected by issues that could have been resolved had you not been in such a rush to get the program started.

Conduct a Pilot-Test Session

- **Conduct a real-life run through.** Conducting a "dry run" of the curriculum with the instructors will provide the opportunity for them—and you—to identify issues with the curriculum, the facilities, or the instructors before they are identified by the class. A dry run also provides an opportunity for instructors to ask questions and for you to coach them in their presentation skills. Conducting a dry run will make the instructors feel more comfortable and allow the class to run more smoothly during the first actual delivery.

- **Observe the pilot session.** You know how the CERT program should work, and perhaps, you will be able to identify nuances in the training that no one else will. You also have a vested interest in seeing the program succeed. Take the time to observe the entire pilot session and provide your own feedback to the instructors at the end of each session.

- **Evaluate the pilot program.** Your first, or "pilot" offering of the CERT program will set the tone for future deliveries—and for the continued growth of the entire program. Set yourself, your instructors, and the CERT volunteers up for success by planning a thorough, "fearless" critique of the initial delivery. This critique should include:

    - **The curriculum.** What worked well? What parts of the curriculum need some revision to make them more effective? As developed, the CERT materials present the critical content for CERT programs, but local procedures and practice, as well as community needs, may require that you tailor the content to address your local requirements.

    - **The delivery.** Even experts may need your help to be good instructors. Be sure to monitor the class and get feedback from the participants on how the materials were delivered. This will help you and the instructors refine the training delivery and assist you in selecting future instructors. (If you use multiple instructors—and most CERT programs do—be sure to structure your feedback form by topic so that you can identify the individual instructor, what he or she is doing well, and where he or she may need help.)

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

How To: Delivering CERT Training (Continued)

Arrange Facilities

You may not be able to change poor facilities, but there may be steps you can take to improve the facilities you have. Take the time to get feedback on the facilities from the class. Be sure to include factors, such as accessibility, parking, restroom/break facilities, lighting, temperature, visibility, and ability to hear the instructors on the feedback form.

When planning for training facilities, you may want to weigh the advantages and disadvantages of using a fixed facility versus taking the training on the road. A fixed facility limits your logistical challenges but may be inconvenient for the participants. One CERT program held the training in different fire stations throughout the community. This approach was convenient for the participants from that area and introduced firefighters from the station to the CERT volunteers and the program.

Start on the Right Track

- **Check the classroom and materials before the session begins.** There are only a few things worse for participants than watching an instructor try to figure out how the projector works or waiting for the instructor to find classroom materials that didn't get to the classroom. Be sure to check out everything before the class begins. Show your instructors how to operate all equipment during the dry run. Use the materials checklists at the front of each unit in the Instructor Guide to ensure that everything that will be needed for each session is actually in the classroom, accessible, and working.

- **Make a good first impression.** CERT participants are making an investment of time and energy in CERT and the community. Make them feel welcome. Have signs that help them with parking, bathroom facilities etc. Greet them when they arrive. Consider having snacks and break food available. (One CERT program provided snacks for the opening session and asked for volunteers to provide goodies for the next sessions. Try to involve volunteers with the program early.)

- **Take time to learn the students' motives.** Make time in the training (e.g., during the icebreaker, after the first session, after the last session, or during breaks) to talk to the students about why they enrolled. Find out:

  - What prompted them to enroll.
  - How they found out about the training.
  - Their satisfaction level with the program, the schedule, and the training intensity.
  - Their suggestions for improving future deliveries.
  - What you can do to sustain their interest in participation.

  Gaining this information from the students themselves can tell you more about the volunteers' needs, changes you need to make in the future, whether your marketing program is working, and what you need to do to maintain and grow the program.

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

Words of Advice: Tips for Delivering Training

Joe Lowry - Memphis, Tennessee
Combine Lecture With Exercises

We begin the training with lectures supported by video, slides, and overhead projected materials. Whenever possible, we combine the lecture with practical, tabletop, and team-building exercises. A disaster simulation is staged to allow students to apply their newly acquired skills in a realistic environment with multiple casualties.

Frank Lucier - San Francisco, California
Make Training Effective and Fun

I feel that the initial training is the critical. That's when you get the volunteers in the door. If that training isn't effective and enjoyable for the participants, you will lose them forever.

Rachel Jacky - Portland, Oregon
Use Training Props

In addition to the printed material, training props are critical for demonstrating skills and giving students the opportunity to practice those skills..

Joe Lowry - Memphis, Tennessee
Bring Neighbors Together for a Common Goal

The most beneficial CERT training we offer is not in the classroom at all. We feel it's very critical to stress the importance of getting to know each other's neighbors. We teach people that in a catastrophic event, it will be their neighbors that they will be looking at. We help to open the doors for these people so they can know how to pool their resources within their individual neighborhoods. This type of training brings neighbors together for a common goal.

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

Starting a CERT Program - Step 7: Delivering Training

Sample Registration Form

You may want to use a registration form to identify individuals interested in attending CERT training. A sample registration form is shown below.
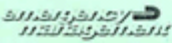
COMMUNITY EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM (CERT) TRAINING/SPRING 2003

I would like to register for the eight-session CERT training and would like to attend:

☐ Wednesday evenings [DATES HERE]

☐ Saturday mornings [DATES HERE]

☐ I am unable to attend the training this spring, but please contact me about future CERT training.

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY:

NAME:

STREET ADDRESS:

CITY:	STATE:	ZIP:

NEAREST CROSS STREET TO YOUR HOME ADDRESS:

TELEPHONE (DAY):	(EVENING):

EMAIL AT WHICH YOU WANT TO RECEIVE CERT INFORMATION:

Please mail this form (one registration per form, please) to:

[ADDRESS HERE].

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE **[COMMUNITY]** CERT PROGRAM, PLEASE CHECK **[WEB ADDRESS]** OR CALL **[TELEPHONE CONTACT NUMBER]**.

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

Sample Program Flyer

A sample CERT Program Flyer is shown below.   The text for the flyer appears after the graphics.

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

Starting a CERT Program - Step 7: Delivering Training

Sample Program Flyer (Continued)

CERT Course Content

The basic course will include those components necessary to get the team started and become capable of performing basic CERT functions. Each member must complete four four-hour classes in the following areas to become certified. Classes are scheduled to accommodate the needs of each team and are available daytime or evening, seven days a week.

Teams will learn:

Disaster Preparedness: Instructs team members how to prepare themselves and their neighborhoods for the various hazards that may occur.

Team Organization and Disaster Psychology: Addresses organization and management principles necessary for a CERT to operate successfully. Covers critical incident stress for victims as well as workers.

Medical Operations: Team members will learn how to conduct triage, establish medical treatment areas, and provide basic first aid for victims.

Damage Assessment: Team members will learn how to rapidly assess damage employing a standardized format used throughout the county.

Disaster Simulation: A small-scale disaster simulation, located in the team's neighborhood, is also a part of the basic program.

Fire Suppression: Team members will learn how to use extinguishers and other equipment to suppress small fires.

Light Search and Rescue: Team members will learn light search and rescue planning, techniques, and rescuer safety.

Continuing Education:

Refresher classes are held several times a year and are open to all teams based on availability and need.

Some of the other available continuing education courses:
Terrorism Awareness
Communications (Amateur radio operations, hand-held)
CPR courses are available year-round for active CERT members*.
Critical Incident Stress Management

Large-scale disaster simulations are held once a year where all teams are invited to participate.

*CPR is not considered a component of CERT training.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

What is a CERT Member?
A CERT member is a person who is trained to prepare for and respond after a disaster in their neighborhood. A group of ten or more members of a neighborhood, apartment complex, business, or similar residential area comprise a team. Persons not affiliated with a team may serve as individuals.

Who may join a CERT?
Anyone who is interested in helping his or her neighborhood prepare for a disaster and provide assistance afterward. Team training is preferred however persons may be trained even if they are not affiliated with a team.

Where can I get more information about the CERT program?
Contact the Miami-Dade County Office of Emergency Management at:
(305) 468-5416 or (305) 468-5418 or
E-mail to: eoc@co.miami-dade.fl.us

The CERT Information Line:
305-468-5445. This information line will make available training schedules and other information relevant to the CERT program.

CERT WEBSITE RESOURCES:
Miami-Dade Office of Emergency Management
www.co.miami-dade.fl.us/oem/cert.htm
CERT program information and disaster preparedness tips

Federal Emergency Management Agency:
http://www.fema.gov/emi/cert
Information about the national CERT program and links to other CERT sites

Miami-Dade Office of Emergency Management (305) 468-5900 www.miamidade.gov/oem

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

Starting a CERT Program - Step 7: Delivering Training

Sample Program Flyer: Text

Community Emergency Response Team (CERT)

There is a very good chance that your neighborhood will be on its own during the early stages following a catastrophic disaster.   After a catastrophic disaster, citizens will volunteer to help. Without proper training these people can expose themselves to potential injury and even death!

Experience has shown that basic training in disaster survival and rescue skills improves the ability of citizens to survive until responders or other assistance arrives.

Miami-Dade County: Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Program Description

The Miami-Dade County Office of Emergency Management (OEM) has become a part of a national network of CERT communities. OEM has developed a program that is designed to help neighborhoods prepare for and respond after catastrophic disasters such as hurricanes, tornadoes, and other major emergencies.

Individuals completing CERT training may be affiliated with one or more of the following teams:
- Neighborhood CERT: Ten or more neighbors serving immediate residential neighborhood.
- Business and Civic Organizations CERT: Co-workers serving place of business and surrounding area.
- School CERT: Faculty and staff serving a particular school and the surrounding areas.
- Government Agency CERT: Government agency staff that serve a particular agency or surrounding area.
- Faith-Based CERT: Teams based at a house of worship serving the immediate neighborhood, or travel into areas that need assistance.
- Youth CERT: Organized service-oriented groups, such as Civil Air Patrol, Fire or Police Explorers, or school-based clubs.
- Individuals not affiliated with a team may still be trained and serve the Miami-Dade community.

Once trained, a CERT will be able to provide the following services to their neighborhood:

- Increase their neighborhood's disaster readiness
- Perform triage and provide medical services to the injured
- Perform light search and rescue operations
- Extinguish small fires and teach fire safety.
- Assess damage after a disaster
- Organize procurement of supplies

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

Sample Program Flyer: Text (Continued)

CERT Course Content

The basic course will include those components necessary to get the team started and become capable of performing basic CERT functions. Each member must complete four four-hour classes in the following areas to become certified. Classes are scheduled to accommodate the needs of each team and are available daytime or evening, seven days a week.

Teams will learn:

- Disaster Preparedness: Instructs team members how to prepare themselves and their neighborhoods for the various hazards that may occur.
- Team Organization and Disaster Psychology: Addresses organization and management principles necessary for a CERT to operate successfully. Covers critical incident stress for victims as well as workers.
- Medical Operations: Team members will learn how to conduct triage, establish medical treatment areas, and provide basic first aid for victims.
- Damage Assessment: Team members will learn how to rapidly assess damage employing a standardized format used throughout the county.
- Disaster Simulation: A small-scale disaster simulation, located in the team's neighborhood, is also a part of the basic program.
- Fire Suppression: Team members will learn how to use extinguishers and other equipment to suppress small fires.
- Light Search and Rescue: Team members will learn light search and rescue planning, techniques, and rescuer safety.

Continuing Education:

- Refresher classes are held several times a year and are open to all teams based on availability and need. Additional courses such as C.P.R., Terrorism Awareness, and presentations by professionals from both the public and private organizations may be taught throughout the year. Call the CERT information line at (305) 468-5445 for training updates.
- Large-scale disaster simulations are held once a year where all teams are teams are invited to participate.

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

Starting a CERT Program - Step 7: Delivering Training

Sample Program Flyer: Text (Continued)

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

What is a CERT Member?

A CERT member is a person who is trained to prepare for and respond after a disaster in their neighborhood. A group of ten or more members of a neighborhood, apartment complex, business, or similar residential area comprise a team. Persons not affiliated with a team my serve as individuals.

Who may join a CERT?

Anyone who is interested in helping his or her neighborhood prepare for a disaster and provide assistance afterward. Team training is preferred however persons may be trained even if they are not affiliated with a team.

Where can I get more information about CERT?

Contact the Miami-Dade County Office of Emergency Management at: (305) 468-5416 or (305) 468-5418 or E-mail to: eoc@miamidade.gov

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

Starting a CERT Program - Step 7: Delivering Training

Sample Training Records

Keeping accurate training records is critical for both effective resource management and for preventing liability issues. A sample training record form is shown on the next page.

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

Starting a CERT Program - Step 7: Delivering Training

Sample Training Records

CERT Member Personal Information

Title:	First Name:		MI:	Last Name:			ID #:
Address:		City:			State:		Zip:
Telephone Numbers:	Home:		Work:			Fax:	
	Pager:		Cell:				
Email Address:							

CERT Type: (Check all that apply)

☐ CERT-NBH	☐ CERT-SCH	☐ CERT-FBO	☐ CERT-BUS	☐ CERT-GOV	☐ CERT-UN	☐ CERT-Y

Region Name:		Name of Sub-Division (neighborhood):	
Team Affiliation	☐ Yes ☐ No	CERT Name:	Team #:
Reg. Complete	☐ Yes ☐ No	Waiver Signed ☐ Yes ☐ No	Team Leader ☐ Yes ☐ No

Training Completed

Basic CERT Course Completed	☐ Yes ☐ No	Date Course Completed:
Certificate Issued ☐ Yes ☐ No	ID Issued ☐ Yes ☐ No	
Date Basic Course 1:	Date Basic Course 2:	
Fire Supp. Completed ☐ Yes ☐ No	S&R Completed ☐ Yes ☐ No	

Date Refresher Course # 1:	Date Cont. Ed. Course # 1:
Date Refresher Course # 2:	Date Cont. Ed. Course # 2:
Date Refresher Course # 3:	Date Cont. Ed. Course # 3:
Date Refresher Course # 4:	Date Cont. Ed. Course # 4:
Date Drill # 1:	Date Activation #1:
Date Drill # 2:	Date Activation #2:
Date Drill # 3:	Date Activation #3:

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

Starting a CERT Program - Step 7: Delivering Training

Sample Training Evaluation Form

Evaluating each CERT training session can help make sure that your training is effective. A sample training evaluation form is shown below.

CERT Training Evaluation Form

CERT Module: _____

Using the scale below, with **1 meaning poor and 5 meaning excellent**, circle the number that best corresponds to your rating for each question.

COURSE MATERIALS

1. How would you rate the materials for this module overall?

1	2	3	4	5
Poor				Excellent

2. How well did the materials state what you should learn or be able to do at the end of the module?

1	2	3	4	5
Poor				Excellent

3. How would you rate your knowledge of the module content <u>before</u> taking this module?

1	2	3	4	5
Poor				Excellent

4. How would you rate your knowledge of the module content <u>after</u> taking this module?

1	2	3	4	5
Poor				Excellent

5. How would you rate your skill level for the module activities <u>before</u> taking this module?

1	2	3	4	5
Poor				Excellent

6. How would you rate your skill level for the module activities <u>after</u> taking this module?

1	2	3	4	5
Poor				Excellent

7. If audiovisual materials were used in this module, how would you rate their effectiveness?

1	2	3	4	5
Poor				Excellent

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

Sample Training Evaluation Form (Continued)

INSTRUCTORS

8. Overall, how would you rate the instructors for this module?

1	2	3	4	5
Poor				Excellent

9. How would you rate the instructors' knowledge of the content?

1	2	3	4	5
Poor				Excellent

10. How would you rate the instructors' ability to relate to the students?

1	2	3	4	5
Poor				Excellent

11. How well did the instructors meet your expectations for this module?

1	2	3	4	5
Poor				Excellent

FACILITIES

12. How would you rate the classroom?

1	2	3	4	5
Poor				Excellent

13. If a lab was used for this module, how would you rate the lab?

1	2	3	4	5
Poor				Excellent

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

Starting a CERT Program - Step 7: Delivering Training

Sample Training Evaluation Form (Continued)

OVERALL RATING

14. How would you rate this module overall?

1	2	3	4	5
Poor				Excellent

15. What did you like best about this module?

16. What do you think might make this module better?

17. Please use the back of this sheet to provide us with any other comments you have that could help us improve the training in the future.

Thank you!

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

Maintaining a CERT Program - Step 1: Communicating With Volunteers

Overview

Now that you made the investment in your CERT program, what can you do to keep your current volunteers interested and involved? How can you determine their followup training needs, and how can you get them to help you recruit new volunteers? Many of these questions and others may be answered by communicating with the volunteers and partners. This step suggests some ways that you can communicate and some ways for you to use the information you receive.

Contents

This step includes the following resources:

- CERT Communication Techniques
- Tips for Communicating With Volunteers
- Sample Periodic Evaluation
- Sample Newsletter

Web Resources

- Los Angeles CERT website
  Web Address: http://www.cert-la.com/index.htm

- Hernando County, Florida CERT website
  Web Address: http://www.co.hernando.fl.us/em/communit2.htm

- Writing Your Newsletter
  Web Address: http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/depts/it/itaids/online/cbn/lesson02

- Tech Soup: Articles on Using Technology and Designing Websites for Nonprofits
  Web Address: http://www.techsoup.org/articles.cfm?topicid=13&topic=Web%20Building&
  cg=nav&sg=content_topic13

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

How To: CERT Communication Techniques

The Benefits

Frequent communication:

- Helps maintain volunteer interest.
- Makes volunteers feel like they're part of the team.
- Keeps everyone abreast of what's happening in the community and with the CERT program.
- Communicating with volunteers also helps you learn what's important to your teams—what training they need, whether they feel that the program is working for them, and how they believe they can contribute to the community through their CERT efforts.

Using Various Communication Mechanisms

Consider a newsletter, email system, or electronic bulletin board for your program. These mechanisms are good for keeping CERT volunteers abreast of:

- Upcoming training activities.
- New CERT classes or teams being formed.
- Refresher training or special training presentations.
- CERT exercises, graduations, or awards being presented.
- Human-interest stories.
- Community safety projects or activities.
- Safety tips for the season.

Creating CERT Websites

If you're really ambitious, you might consider developing a website. Websites not only facilitate communication with your volunteers, but also serve to inform potential volunteers and supporters about CERT's role in the community. If you choose to develop a website, consider these tips:

- Start by creating lists of your committees, volunteers, and sponsors. With their permission, consider including their addresses, email addresses, and home and office telephone numbers.
- Purchase a website domain that everyone can remember.
- Find a local Internet provider who will donate the cost of hosting a website. Be sure to give the website designer and host plenty of credit for their contributions.
- Create an email and fax list of all media, including the names of editors and pertinent information about content and deadlines.
- Include a community response form on the site. This is a great way to generate both good ideas and volunteers!
- Add important local and national web addresses as links on your site. Be sure to include the CERT, FEMA, and NOAA websites and local or community sites.
- Include a list of CERT volunteers who can speak to interested groups on the site.

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

How To: CERT Communication Techniques (Continued)

Establishing Rules for Yourself

> Regardless of how you communicate with your members and others, there are some rules that you should establish:
>
> - **Be accessible.** Set aside time every day to check the message board for comments that come into the site. Respond promptly.
>
> - **Do not provide partial information.** Wait until you have gathered all of the information you need to provide a complete response. If need be, send an email or make a phone call to explain that you are checking information and will get back with an answer.
>
> If you commit to a response by a certain date or time, stand by your commitment.

Maintaining a Focus on the "Team"

> Teamwork is so important to a successful CERT program that you should always focus communications on teamwork. Use your communications to:
>
> - Share team success stories.
> - Announce special projects where volunteers are needed.
> - Provide recognition for team efforts.

Rewarding Commitment

> Always remember that your success relies on volunteer commitment. Provide recognition wherever possible to those who are committed to your program. Consider awards for hours given, special projects completed, consistent support, etc., as a motivator for your team members.

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

Words of Advice: Tips for Obtaining Resources

Frank Lucier - San Francisco, California
Distinguish Between Types of Communications

There are two types of communications:

- Day-to-day communications (newsletters, phone trees, email, mailings).
- Communications used during a disaster (HAM radios, family service radios, runners).

It is important to distinguish between the two. What works day to day will probably not work in a disaster.

Joe Lowry - Memphis, Tennessee
Use Newsletters

We have a reservist newsletter that we send out via the mail. The newsletter is an important tool for maintaining and building the program. If you offer drills, refresher classes, and other events of interest to program participants, a newsletter can be an economical alternative to all the individual flyers and announcements you'd otherwise send out.

Rachel Jacky - Portland, Oregon
Use Many Methods Including Phone Trees

We use every method that we can—newsletters and announcements that we mail out, email messages, neighborhood-association newsletter articles, and print/TV media pieces.

It's also good to use the phone trees organized by the teams. We've used their phone trees several times to activate the teams in real emergencies, and we rely on those phone trees to function well. Using the phone trees to communicate non-emergency information would be good practice for real-life emergencies.

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

Maintaining a CERT Program - Step 1: Communicating With Volunteers

Periodic Evaluation

Periodic evaluation is important, even if your program has been up and running awhile. Periodic evaluations can:

- Tell you if your volunteers are maintaining interest or if your program is getting stale.
- Provide input to help you identify additional training that would be useful.
- Identify new ways to utilize CERTs.
- Offer new recruiting ideas.

A sample periodic evaluation is shown below. You should revise the form to meet the needs of your program.

Sample CERT Periodic Evaluation Form

Instructions: Please complete all questions. Your comments are very important!

Neighborhood/Workplace: _____

1. How long have you been active in the CERT program? _____ Years _____ Months

2. How would you rate your current interest level in the CERT program?

   ☐ High   ☐ Moderate   ☐ Low

   If your current interest level is moderate or low, what types of activities would increase your interest?

3. What types of additional training do you think would be helpful for you to maintain or improve your skills?

4. When would you be <u>most</u> available for additional training?

   ☐ Weekday evenings   ☐ Saturday mornings

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

Sample CERT Periodic Evaluation Form

5. Has your CERT team been deployed during your period of involvement?

    ☐ Yes ☐ No

    If your team has not been deployed SKIP to question 10.

6. If your team has been deployed, please describe the nature of the deployment?

7. What was your role in the deployment?

8. How confident did you feel in your ability to perform the duties assigned to you during the deployment?

    ☐ Very confident ☐ Somewhat confident ☐ Not confident

    If you felt less than confident about your ability to perform the duties assigned to you, what would improve your confidence level in the future?

9. How would you rate your performance on your last deployment?

    ☐ Excellent ☐ Good ☐ Poor

10. If you have other suggestions that you believe would help us to improve the CERT program, please write them in the space below.

Thank you!

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

Maintaining a CERT Program - Step 1: Communicating With Volunteers

Sample Newsletter

Newsletters are a popular method for communicating with CERT volunteers. The following four pages are a sample newsletter from Whatcom County, Washington.

COMMUNITY EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM (CERT)
Whatcom County, Washington

CERT News is written and edited by Ann Melton with a little help from others. If you would like to submit an article for publication, please contact the Division of Emergency Management, (360) 676-6681

IN THIS ISSUE

ON GOING EVENTS:
EMERGENCY WORKER CARD (DEM)-A Reminder

In order to keep your Emergency Worker Card (DEM) up to date, there is a requirement to participate in at lease one CERT activity during each calendar year. (See the March 2002 newsletter for more information). As some of you might have limited time, or other obligations that prevent your active participation with the group, here are some alternatives: Write a short newsletter article; send in a notice of other community or school projects you have helped with that relate to emergency preparedness; or suggest a Continuing Education class you would like to attend and assist in its organization.

If there is no contact with CERT it is assumed that you are not available at this time. [Point of Contact Information], Area Representative Coordinator, may contact you in the near future. She will be calling each person with survey questions to find out basic information and desired involvement level. Special plans are in progress for a very active CERT group and your participation is invited and welcomed.

PERSONNEL ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM (PAS) TAGS--A follow up
Emergency Management is in the process of procuring the materials necessary to make PAS tags. We will need a couple of volunteers to take the task of making the tags. Please call DEM (676-6681) if this interests you.

CERT SHIRTS--To be continued
Several more shirt orders are needed before a reasonable discount for quantity can be achieved. The offer will be presented again in October and tentative prices given for the number which are requested.

PAST EVENTS:

RED CROSS MINI-INSTITUTE
By Jeannine Chapman

CERT members were invited by Whatcom County Chapter of the American Red Cross (ARC) to attend the Mini-Institute classes in July. Notification of additional classes sponsored by ARC will be published as we are notified.

"Introduction to Disaster Services," an overview of disasters, described community response and the role of the ARC Disaster Services. A review of the immediate and long-term effects of disasters to victims and to the community was discussed. It was noted that disasters often bring people together and create a sense of patriotism; neighbors helping neighbors.

An overview of the "Management and Administration of ARC" was described as direct services to the victims including Disaster Health, Family Service and Mass Care (care of large numbers of victims). There are also Internal Support Services such as Accounting, Communications, Computer operations, Logistics, Records and Reports, and Staffing and Training. External Support Services can be described as Fund Raising and Public Affairs.

Sunday's classes focused on the activities of DHS (Disaster Health Services). Many that attended were registered nurses (RN's) who wanted to volunteer, and were interested in being sent to national disasters as well as local areas. We learned that shelters must have a nurse on duty 24-hours a day and that people with serious medical problems are usually taken to hospitals or motels. Several of those attending were also interested in the CERT program.

ARC instructors emphasized that volunteers need training, experience, commitment and dedication. They welcome any CERT members who want to attend their classes and get additional training. In a disaster, CERT members will be an asset to the response by the Red Cross and other agencies.

BOOTH AT WHATCOM COUNTY EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION PICNIC
Chris Camp staffed the CERT informational booth at the annual employee picnic at Hovander Park on July 25. Posters made of pictures of past CERT classes and their many activities were displayed as well as information posters about Emergency Management. Brochures and handouts detailing emergency preparedness were offered. Chris was available to answer any questions about the CERT program and the upcoming September classes.

FUTURE EVENTS:

WILD EDIBLE PLANTS CLASS – August 2   **By Ann Melton**
A full house is expected for Ann's wild party. The guests will wander about Ann's "out back" with wanted posters and pictures searching for the elusive provender hiding in the woods. A "non" gourmet taste fest will include rose hip jam, salal jelly, cranberry catsup, cattail corn on the cob, tempura fried day lily blossoms, and pan-fried roots. If the weather (and time) is cooperative, a short trip to Lake Padden for other wild food will be included. If there is additional interest another class will be offered in the winter. The class will begin at 6:00 p.m. for those that have pre-registered.

ANNUAL NATIONAL NIGHT OUT – August 6
A CERT booth will be set up at the Haggen's Meridian store parking lot to offer disaster preparedness information and tell about the CERT program from 2:00 until 8:00 PM. Cari Thomson will lead the staff at the booth this year but she needs additional volunteers. This event will be part of National Night Out, a national movement to regain neighborhoods and get acquainted with those that share the space around your homes. This will be Bellingham's sixth year participating, and CERT's second.

TRAIN THE TRAINER CLASSES OFFERED IN SNOHOMISH COUNTY   AUGUST 12-15
Snohomish County Department of Emergency Management is offering a CERT Train-the-Trainer class on August 12-15 in Everett. The class size is limited to 30. If you are interested, please contact [Point of Contact Information].

BOOTH AT THE NORTHWEST WASHINGTON FAIR IN LYNDEN   AUGUST 12-18
CERT members have covered all the shifts for the CERT Booth at Fair. Thank you volunteers.

CERT CLASSES: CLASSES START   **SEPTEMBER 12**
Community Emergency Response Team training will be offered during several classes over the fall and winter months. Strong interest has been expressed from neighborhood groups, church groups, county employees, and individuals wanting to better prepare themselves. Two simultaneous classes will begin on September 12: a class for county employees during the day and another in the evening.

PICNIC / FIRE DEMONSTRATION / LUMMI ISLAND   **IN SEPTEMBER-TBD**
The **details** of the Lummi Island Volunteer Fire Department demonstration and the picnic at Bob Busch's home **will be sent by email** or phone message to everyone prior to the event. As the ferry to Lummi Island will be out of service for two weeks in September, the picnic will *probably* be the third Thursday of September. Complete information will be sent to each CERT member as soon as it is available.

CERT EXPO 2002 October 5, 2002   **Snohomish County, WA**
All Washington State FEMA CERT graduates are invited to attend a CERT exposition and training session at the Evergreen Fairgrounds, Monroe. The City of Monroe, Snohomish County Dept. of Emergency Management and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers sponsor this EXPO. Training will include:

Advanced Search and Rescue	**Incident Command**	**Communications**
Cribbing	**Large power Tools**	**and More!**
Survival Disaster Preparedness	**Advanced Fire Suppression**	
Advanced Triage	**Traffic Control**	

The training will culminate with an exercise to utilize CERT skills. Registration by Sept 13th is $20.00. After Sept 13th it is $25.00. An event T-shirt will be provided with each registration. For additional information, log on to www.snodem.org and look under the CERT tab.

Would you like to get a Whatcom County team together to attend? [Point of Contact Information]

LA'S NATIONAL CERT CONFERENCE PARTNERS IN PREPAREDNESS "OUR HISTORY IS OUR FUTURE"
Los Angeles Fire Department (LAFD) will be hosting a two-day National CERT Conference in early November 2002. Many representatives from CERT programs from around the nation are expected to participate and share thoughts, ideas and experiences to help build a unified CERT Program.

It all started in Los Angeles in response to earthquake preparedness and civilian response to overwhelming disasters, and has grown into a nationwide program, which was recently recognized by President Bush. Bush has requested that CERT membership increase by 400,000 during the next two years.

Captain Don Lee, LAFD CERT Coordinator has secured a hotel close to the airport that will serve as the conference center and will house all guests wishing to stay overnight. So mark your calendar, E-mail to cert-la@usa.net to reserve your spots. Watch for more information coming soon.

ARTICLES:

FAMILY DRILLS – AN ADVENTURE   **By Ann Melton**
Are you ready for a disaster like those presented during the recent fires and floods in other areas of the United States? Planning is important but a rehearsal will identify any flaws in your plans. Several CERT groups have tried out these suggestions.
- Surprise your family with an unannounced trip over a weekend. Give your family 20 minutes to pack … then leave … ready or not. Drive 100 miles and stay in a motel … or tent. Do you have enough gas to go that far without stopping for a fill-up? At you destination, make a list of everything you forgot to bring. Discuss how you would feel if your home was destroyed – did you bring important papers, irreplaceable family heirlooms, your pet?
- Try a weekend without electricity by shutting off the breaker. Cook your food over a fire in the yard or eat cold foods. Of course, there is no TV but you do have a battery-powered radio. No "time out" at the movie or fast food restaurant, please. Don't open the refrigerator door.
- Go on a drive one afternoon and surprise everyone with a stop at a remote area and spend the night there … with only the items in your car! By morning, you will know exactly what supplies you need to have in your car emergency kit.
- Will your survival foods last a whole weekend? This is a good drill to conduct when it is time to rotate your emergency food and supplies. Or hold a picnic with other CERT members and see if your survival foods are palatable. Try to live a whole week using only foods in your pantry and your stored water supply. Don't open the refrigerator, … however, wild food collection is acceptable.
- Try a fire drill at 2 am. No electric lights are allowed.

These "adventures" might seem a little extreme, but each drill will identify missing supplies or useless items or deficient plans. You might want to revise your disaster kit, emergency foods, your storage methods, or your survival plans.

The most prepared are the most dedicated.

~ Raymond Berry ~

WEB SITES OF INTEREST   **by Ann Melton**
Center for Disease Control – Health Topics A to Z http://www.cdc.gov/health/

This is a slice of Bellingham – can you recognize the location? Great aerial view and map. Expand it to your neighborhood. Images are courtesy of the US Geological Survey.
> http://terraserver.homeadvisor.msn.com/image.asp?S=10&T=1&X=2694&Y=26982&Z=10&W=2
> http://terraserver.homeadvisor.msn.com/image.asp?S=14&T=2&X=168&Y=1686&Z=10&W=2

ALL THIS IN FIFTEEN YEARS: **by Ann Melton and Jeannine Chapman**
Brittany (Britt) Chapman, at age 15, became a CERT member, and is the youngest member of the Whatcom County CERT group. Since becoming a member last June, Britt has acted in her CERT capacity at the Airport Disaster Drill as well as at the AirFest. She is certified by the Red Cross in First Aid, CPR & AED. She enjoyed the continuing education moulage class and expects to have a kit put together before Halloween to try on her friends and future CERT training "victims."

What most people don't know is that Britt deals daily with a chronic illness -- Ulcerative Colitis. She has been sick since she was 9 years old and has been in and out of hospitals going through painful surgeries including a temporary colostomy. She is often called on by Seattle Children's Hospital to help other parents and teenagers deal with the illness and surgeries of Ulcerative Colitis, an embarrassing and serious illness for children.

Britt is currently writing a brochure about her experiences with Ulcerative Colitis and her surgeries and procedures for the Seattle doctors and Surgeons in the IBD unit to provide to parents and teens. Britt has been a member and spokesperson for the Whatcom County/Skagit "Crohns and Colitis" Support Group and continues to help anyone that calls her.

Nothing holds her back from being a normal, social, and active teenager who loves dancing, singing, arts/crafts and sports. Britt will be a Junior at Sehome High School in the fall. She is also active with her church youth group where she participates in wilderness camping, being a camp youth leader, more instruction in first aid service, and learning service to others. This month she attended "Pioneer Trek", dressing like a pioneer (yes in a skirt and bonnet) and using a handcart to experience the teamwork and hardships of the early pioneers. Killing a live chicken, cooking and eating it was one of the highlights of that trip.

In her spare time Britt helps a family who has several young children. One child is severely handicapped (mute, retarded, and partially blind) and she has learned to communicate with him by sign language.

This summer you can find Britt working at her new job position with the Red Cross as the Outreach Program Assistant. Brittany has learned to enjoy life to it's fullest, and serving and helping others shows her love to all. Brittany Chapman will be sixteen on August 25. Happy Birthday, Britt. You are an inspiration to everyone and magnanimous representative for CERT.

RADIO COLUMN   **Introduction to Amateur Radio**   **By Jon Landers**
Amateur Radio enthusiasts come from all ages, walks of life, and interests. Some are attracted by the ability to communicate across the country, around the globe, even with astronauts on space missions. Others build and experiment with electronics. (Most drive their families' nuts with wires, antennas, and boxes that make strange noises).

Although the main purpose of Amateur Radio is fun, it is called the "Amateur Radio Service" because it also has a serious face. The FCC created this "Service" and began licensing radio operators in 1912 to fill the need for a pool of experts who could provide backup emergency communications. In addition, the FCC acknowledged the ability of the hobby to advance the communication and technical skills of radio, and to enhance international goodwill.

There have been some recent changes that make getting your first license much easier. Morse code proficiency is no longer required for the first test. Should you choose to attain more advanced licenses, the code is required, but not at the higher speed requirements of the past. For further information:
        http://www.arrl.org
        The American Radio Relay League, 225 Main Street, Newington, CT 06111
        Telephone: 1-800-32 NEW-HAM

NOTICE REGARDING THE SEPTEMBER NEWSLETTER
[Point of Contact Information] will edit the September Newsletter. [Point of Contact Information] will be in Alaska until September 2. Please send any articles to [Point of Contact Information]. The newsletter for September will be completed by August 28. Articles will be in great demand and are requested from CERT members.

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

Maintaining a CERT Program - Step 2: Maintaining Partnerships

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Overview

As your CERT program grows, the partnerships that you established when starting your program will become even more important. You'll also want to develop new partnerships that will help your program expand. This step presents ideas for maintaining and expanding partnerships.

Contents

This step includes the following resources:

- Communicating Successes
- Tips for Maintaining Partnerships

Web Resources

- "The Connection" Newsletter
  <u>Web Address</u>: http://www.naem.com/connection.html

- Keep Them Coming Back: Tips From the Field, Texas Commission on Volunteerism and Community Service
  <u>Web Address</u>: http://www.txserve.org/mgmt/volrec/tips.html

- Recognizing Volunteers
  <u>Web Address</u>: http://www.energizeinc.com/art/aleav.html

- Strategic Communications for Nonprofits: A Step-by-Step Guide to Working with the Media
  <u>Web Address</u>: http://www.benton.org/Practice/Features/stratcommrevw.html

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CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

How To: Communicating Success

Whether you are marketing CERT initially or working to gain additional support, it is important that you communicate CERT successes. By communicating successes, you will garner more support from the community by establishing a familiar presence for the program over a period of time.

Establishing a Communication Strategy

Because CERTs deal with everyday citizens, CERT success stories make good news stories. Communicating successes should be an on-going effort because every segment of the community has potential CERT volunteers or sponsors. Seeing CERTs in action and involved in the public safety of individuals, families, employees, and the community can motivate volunteers and sponsors to want to become involved with the program.

In planning local media efforts, start by recognizing that a strong committee will make the job easier and more effective. Regardless of how many different audiences need to be reached, a strong communications program requires an energetic leader, with partners and volunteers who can disseminate the information about what CERTs are and what they do.

Developing and Maintaining Media Relations

To help create a strong public information initiative, tap into people within your department or CERT volunteers who have relationships with the media. Build on existing relationships. You may want to have a Communications Committee.

If possible, identify one or more individuals with public relations or marketing backgrounds for your committee. CERT success will stem from a positive message of how the program can benefit the community. As you select Communications Committee members, consider those who:

- Own businesses.
- Are familiar with local media.
- Understand the uses of computers and the Internet.
- Have experience in fundraising.
- Can commit time to the CERT program.

Finally, invite members of the media to take the training. Having them participate and see the value of the training can make them an advocate. Many CERT programs have gained positive exposure by newspaper articles or brief coverage on the evening news.

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

How To: Communicating Success (Continued)

Keeping Volunteers Involved

Although your CERT volunteers may be committed to the program, it is important to keep them involved by continuing to provide meaningful assignments.

Today's volunteers are looking for positions that present a challenge or the chance to learn a new skill. Some volunteers are looking to tap their creativity, meet other people, take a break from their jobs, or just feel like they're accomplishing something. If you create short- and long-term volunteer assignments with differing levels of commitment, you will be able to draw from a wider variety of volunteers. As you create the volunteer base, look for a volunteer manager who can help translate overall CERT needs into task assignments.

Your partners and volunteers are priceless assets. Use their abilities to help you meet CERT goals—not just in communicating successes but in other areas as well. Be sure to recognize their efforts through thank-you notes, awards ceremonies, or other means.

Introducing CERT to the Public

Volunteers who are already active in the CERT program may need no introduction. But there are many potential volunteers who don't know about CERTs or what they do. Some potential volunteers have no interest in being CERT members but would be willing to volunteer in other capacities. Introducing the CERT program and its scope can help draw volunteers to your program. Try the tips below to get your message out.

- Schedule a presentation about CERT. Bring in current CERT members, and allow them to talk about the program. If possible, bring in other Program Coordinators to describe their programs and share their success stories. Invite the media. Most importantly, stress the benefits to the entire community of having an active CERT program.
- Develop flyers, and distribute them at community events.
- Place short articles in neighborhood newsletters or local newspapers. Provide a contact phone number or email address so that people who have questions or want more information know who to call or where to go for that information.
- Place a teaser on an electronic community bulletin board, together with contact information for those who want more information.
- Look for other ways to keep your program visible—and ask CERT members to share their ideas.

Most importantly, present a consistent appearance for CERT in terms of its name and message so that CERT will become a symbol for the benefits it provides to the community.

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

Words of Advice: Tips for Maintaining Partnerships

Rachel Jacky - Portland, Oregon
Every Aspect of CERT Demonstrates Partnerships

We have partnerships with other agencies for their expertise, we partner with the business community for funding and supply assistance, and then we partner with our volunteers and enlist them as our own to spread the word, train one another, and build support.

It seems that every aspect of a CERT program demonstrates some kind of partnership. The primary partnership is between the agency that sponsors and trains the teams, and the citizens who give us their time, energy, and commitment to make the teams effective. We train and operate our teams in partnership with our professional responders. We exercise our teams in partnership with other CERT programs in our area. We equip our teams through partnerships with the private sector.

Joseph Daly - Edgewater, Florida
Working and Thinking Outside the Box

After the CERTS complete their initial training courses, CPR training, ARC courses and disaster drills, etc. how do you maintain the group's interest? Edgewater CERTS form partnerships and become involved in community activities. The community involvement helps to sustain the CERT members interest in the program.

Frank Lucier - San Francisco, California
Partnerships Are Essential

Partnerships (with fire departments, emergency medical, law enforcement, emergency managers) are essential for starting and maintaining a CERT program. Establishing partnerships eliminates many of the turf problems we have seen in the past.

Maintaining partnerships with the business community can be extremely beneficial. For example, Chevron Corporation became our partner in San Francisco early on in the program. We trained over 400 of their employees who lived in the City. In addition, they hosted, at their facility, three of the train-the-trainer programs. The Corporation continues to support the concept of CERT today by hosting BayNET, an association of CERT program coordinators in Northern California.

Stew Anderson - Natrona County, Wyoming
Partnerships and Resources

Maintaining partnerships will help you obtain the people and materials needed for your CERT program. Encourage members of the press to observe CERT training and get involved in the program.

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

Words of Advice: Tips for Maintaining Partnerships (Continued)

> **Joe Lowry - Memphis, Tennessee**
> **Partnerships and Expertise**
>
> We have partnerships with other agencies for their expertise, we partner with the business community for funding and supply assistance, and then we partner with our volunteers and enlist them as our own to spread the word, train one another, and build support.

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

Maintaining a CERT Program - Step 3: Planning Continuing Training

Overview

Continuing training, exercises, and projects will be important for several reasons. It will help CERTs to maintain and improve their skills, it will keep volunteer involvement and interest high, and it will benefit the entire program and community. This step provides some possible topics and approaches to providing continuing training to CERT volunteers.

Contents

This step includes the following resources:

- Planning and Conducting Refresher Training
- Tips for Planning Continuing Training
- Sample Periodic Evaluation Form

Web Resources

- CERT Website
  Web Address: http://training.fema.gov/emiweb/cert

- Los Angeles CERT Website
  Web Address: http://www.cert-la.com

- Emergency Management Institute: Independent Study Courses
  Web Address: http://training.fema.gov/EMIWeb/crslist.htm

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

How To: Planning and Conducting Refresher Training

Unless your CERTs exercise or are activated regularly, refresher training will be a necessity to keep skills sharp and interest high—it is the "use it or lose it" principle. If your community has experienced a major emergency or disaster recently, you may want to review your needs assessment and look for gaps in services.

Benefits of Continued Training

Be creative about training opportunities for CERT members. Training provides, not only skill improvement and maintenance, it provides an opportunity for you to interact more directly with the volunteers and it helps to maintain volunteer interest and involvement. Remember, you are building a local resource to help you and others.

Offering Advanced Training

You may also wish to present training to enhance CERT members' skills beyond the basic level. For example, some CERT program coordinators have offered training in:

- The Incident Command System (ICS)
- Cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR)
- Automatic external defibrillator (AED)
- Advanced first-aid techniques
- Donations management
- Community relations
- Damage assessment
- Traffic control
- Animal control

Soliciting Suggestions

Your CERT volunteers may have suggestions for refresher or skill-enhancement training so be sure to invite their input. A good way to gain volunteer input is through interest surveys or focus groups, which can be combined with a periodic program evaluation.

Tapping External Resources

Some skill-enhancement training is available through outside organizations. Some sources that you can check for refresher or skill-enhancement training are listed below.

- The American Red Cross offers training in first aid, CPR, and AED. The Red Cross also has a variety of materials that may be of interest to CERT members.
- State emergency management agencies offer a variety of training programs and may be able to provide exercise design assistance.
- Local public and private agencies may have training that, if modified, would be useful for CERT volunteers (utility companies, Humane Society, ARES/RACES, police departments, National Weather Service, mental health departments, and more).

FEMA will help by placing CERT self-study materials and refresher quizzes on its website. Be sure to check the CERT site often for updated materials.

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

Words of Advice: Tips for Planning Continuing Training

Dale Kleos - Whatcom County, Washington
Benefits of Continuing Education

The most beneficial thing we do is continuing education—after the class is over we don't let it drop. More than half of our continuing education deals with embellishing what we taught in the course; the other half deals with other emergency or disaster-related subjects that weren't addressed in the CERT program but are of interest.

Stew Anderson - Natrona County, Wyoming
Continuing Training Is Vital

Continuing training is vital to the program. We offer CPR, terrorism awareness, wildland firefighting assistance, and advanced firefighting. In addition, our volunteers participate in disaster exercises with our local fire department.

Frank Lucier - San Francisco, California
Ask Volunteers About Their Training Needs

CERT volunteers know what skills they are comfortable with and the ones that they are not. If you have painted a realistic disaster picture for them during the training, they know what type of additional training will make them more effective in a disaster. Ask them what they need. One size doesn't fit all. A team of senior citizens needs different types of continuing training than does a student team at the local high school.

Joe Lowry - Memphis, Tennessee
Keeping Volunteers Updated

CERT volunteers must keep up to date on the changes in the community. We keep volunteers up to date by:

- Including informational pieces in the newsletter.
- Scheduling monthly meetings for graduates and interested individuals to attend.
- Conducting refresher training.
- Re-certifying everyone.

Our local government and businesses sponsor community exercises in cooperation with local emergency services agencies so the teams can participate in annual exercises.

We post a calendar of monthly training and exercises on our website. We encourage all citizens to take part in emergency training exercises.

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

Maintaining a CERT Program - Step 3: Planning Continuing Training

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Words of Advice: Tips for Planning Continuing Training (Continuing)

Jennifer Teeler - City of Federal Way, Washington
Keeping the CERT Graduate Involved

One of the challenges in any CERT program is keeping volunteers engaged and involved after they have completed the CERT course. The City of Federal Way, Washington has used a number of techniques to do this including using CERT graduates as volunteers for projects such as installing smoke detectors in area homes, publishing a CERT newsletter, and having CERT members staff a booth at our community fair.

One of the most successful ways we have kept volunteers involved in the program is by offering continuing education classes for CERT graduates. These classes can also contribute valuable skills and information to the graduate's toolbox of knowledge gained through the CERT course.

Olga Arroyo - Orlando, Florida
Offer Ongoing Training for CERT Graduates

Since the program began in 1994, we have trained over 650 CERT members. Each of these members is active and willing to be ready if a disaster hits the City of Orlando. In January 2002, our first class of First Responder was initiated and it was a success with a total of 25 participants. Six of the participants have successfully passed the exam for First Responder on July 2002 by the National Registry of Emergency Medical Technicians. Each year we plan to have this class as an ongoing training for our CERT graduates.

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

Maintaining a CERT Program - Step 3: Planning Continuing Training

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Periodic Evaluation

Periodic evaluation is important, even if your program has been up and running awhile. Periodic evaluations can:

- Tell you if your volunteers are maintaining interest or if your program is getting stale.
- Provide input to help you identify additional training that would be useful.
- Identify new ways to utilize CERTs.
- Offer new recruiting ideas.

A sample periodic evaluation is shown below. You should revise the form to meet the needs of your program.

Sample CERT Periodic Evaluation Form

Instructions: Please complete all questions. Your comments are very important!

Neighborhood/Workplace: _____

11. How long have you been active in the CERT program? _____ Years _____ Months

12. How would you rate your current interest level in the CERT program?

    ☐ High   ☐ Moderate   ☐ Low

    If your current interest level is moderate or low, what types of activities would increase your interest?

13. What types of additional training do you think would be helpful for you to maintain or improve your skills?

14. When would you be <u>most</u> available for additional training?

    ☐ Weekday evenings   ☐ Saturday mornings

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

15. Has your CERT team been deployed during your period of involvement?

    ☐ Yes ☐ No

    If your team has not been deployed SKIP to question 10.

16. If your team has been deployed, please describe the nature of the deployment?

17. What was your role in the deployment?

18. How confident did you feel in your ability to perform the duties assigned to you during the deployment?

    ☐ Very confident ☐ Somewhat confident ☐ Not confident

    If you felt less than confident about your ability to perform the duties assigned to you, what would improve your confidence level in the future?

19. How would you rate your performance on your last deployment?

    ☐ Excellent ☐ Good ☐ Poor

20. If you have other suggestions that you believe would help us to improve the CERT program, please write them in the space below.

Thank you!

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

Maintaining a CERT Program - Step 4: Maintaining Records

Overview

Records maintenance is an important part of your CERT program. You may want to track:

- Marketing contacts.
- People who express interested in CERT.
- Current CERT members by teams.
- Completion of basic and advanced training.
- Instructors and training schedules.
- Administrative information and budget information.

Setting up a good recordkeeping system early on—and keeping it current—will make the job easier.

Contents

This step includes the following resources:

- Maintaining CERT Records
- Tips for Maintaining Records
- Sample Training Record
- Sample Expression of Interest Record
- Sample Marketing Contacts Worksheet
- Sample Instructor Background Questionnaire
- Sample Instructor Record
- Sample Registration Form
- Sample Training Schedule

Web Resources

- Sample Training Schedule: Los Angeles
  Web Address: http://www.cert-la.com/Basic.htm

- Sample Training Schedule: Hernando County, FL
  Web Address: http://www.co.hernando.fl.us/em/events.htm

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

Maintaining a CERT Program - Step 4: Maintaining Records

How To: Maintaining CERT Records

Maintaining records can be tedious, but without proper recordkeeping, you will quickly fall behind and lose track of your program. Some tips for maintaining records are included below:

- **Identify your information needs and develop your forms from the start.** Begin by identifying the potential information requests you will receive as a CERT coordinator. Then design your recordkeeping forms to meet your information needs before your program begins. Next, consider how you will track and organize the information you are collecting. And, finally design simple formats for reporting CERT accomplishments.

- **Collect only the data you need.** Some personal information, such as home telephone and Social Security Numbers are protected from release by the Privacy Act. Some States protect driver license numbers and other information. Release of protected information requires the consent of each individual. The safer approach to protecting information is to not collect it unless you really need it.

- **Keep your database simple and backed up.** Add information only as you need to. If your database is computerized, backup the database frequently. Keep these backup copies in a safe place (e.g., store the backups at a different location).

- **Don't bury yourself in records.** Don't maintain data you won't need or won't use. Think carefully about what you really want to record before developing your forms.

- **Test the forms with your first class.** Provide the forms to your first class to ensure that they record the information you need and work the way you want them to work.

- **Set aside time for record maintenance.** Don't let recordkeeping get ahead of you. Set aside time every day or every week to input data. Develop a plan for archiving or destroying old records.

- **Be careful about sharing data.** Sharing forms is one thing, but sharing personal data may be unlawful. As stated above, certain types of data, such as Social Security Numbers and home telephone numbers is covered under the Privacy Act and may not be released without the individual's permission. If you use a computerized database, it should be password protected.

- **Enlist some help.** If you don't have an administrative assistant assigned to the program, try to enlist one of the CERT graduates to help you. CERT graduates are doing much more than response. In many communities, graduates are coordinating newsletter development, coordinating websites, maintaining equipment, and many other jobs. Why not recordkeeping?

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

Maintaining a CERT Program - Step 4: Maintaining Records

Words of Advice: Tips for Maintaining Records

Stew Anderson - Natrona County, Wyoming
Track Important Information

Recordkeeping is important so that you know:

- Who has completed 100% of the basic training.
- What types of advanced training individuals have completed.
- What types of events (emergency/non-emergency) individuals want to be called out to.
- Locations individuals are willing to travel to.

The other records we keep are CERT member addresses and contact information so we know where CERT members are located.

Rachel Jacky - Portland, Oregon
Reasons To Keep Good and Accessible Records

There are operational, administrative, and political reasons to keep good and accessible records.

- **Operational:** During emergency operations, the teams may self-activate; however, if the sponsoring agency needs to activate the teams, it will need reliable and quick information— where the teams are, how big they are, who their contact persons are.

- **Administrative:** Administratively, we need to keep track of how many people have completed the training, up-to-date contact info for each participant, and information on things like advanced training they may have taken.

- **Political:** Finally, recordkeeping is necessary to generate statistical information for interested parties, such as elected officials, about the number of participants in different parts of the city and the growth of the program.

Joe Lowry - Memphis, Tennessee
Maintain Up-to-Date Rosters

Up-to-date rosters are a pretty important tool for team leaders, fire station captains, or anyone who needs a reliable list for contacting program participants.

Dale Kleos - Whatcom, Washington
Stay in Communication

One main reason we keep records is for communication. Accurate records are needed in order to stay in communication with the graduates. In addition, we have registered emergency workers. Keeping records allows CERT volunteers to be eligible for benefits and insurance as part of that registry.

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

Words of Advice: Tips for Maintaining Records (Continuing)

Frank Lucier - San Francisco, California
Safeguard Personal Information

We are in the business of training and every business keeps records, especially training records. But as with any personal information, you have to get the people's permission to share their information with neighborhood team leaders. We ask the participants, before the end of each training session, if we can share their personal information with the team leaders.

We only kept data that was critical to the program—name, address, phone number, email addresses, training dates, other classes taken, special skills, team assigned to, and team position. Our City Attorney felt that keeping other information (Social Security numbers, driver's license numbers, etc.) could cause some legal issues if they ever got in the wrong hands.

Bottom line is that we guarded personal information with our lives. We kept it on only one computer and this computer was not hooked up to the Internet or our internal network.

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

Sample Training Records

Keeping accurate training records is critical for both effective resource management and for preventing liability issues. A sample training record form is shown on the next page.

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

Maintaining a CERT Program - Step 4: Maintaining Records

Sample Training Records

CERT Member Personal Information

Title:	First Name:		MI:	Last Name:			ID #:
Address:		City:		State:		Zip:	
Telephone Numbers:	Home:		Work:		Fax:		
	Pager:		Cell:				
Email Address:							
CERT Type: (Check all that apply)							
☐ CERT-NBH ☐ CERT-SCH ☐ CERT-FBO ☐ CERT-BUS ☐ CERT-GOV ☐ CERT-UN ☐ CERT-Y							
Region Name:		Name of Sub-Division (neighborhood):					
Team Affiliation	☐ Yes	☐ No	CERT Name:			Team #:	
Reg. Complete	☐ Yes	☐ No	Waiver Signed	☐ Yes	☐ No	Team Leader	☐ Yes ☐ No

Training Completed			
Basic CERT Course Completed	☐ Yes ☐ No	Date Course Completed:	
Certificate Issued	☐ Yes ☐ No	ID Issued	☐ Yes ☐ No
Date Basic Course 1:		Date Basic Course 2:	
Fire Supp. Completed	☐ Yes ☐ No	S&R Completed	☐ Yes ☐ No
Date Refresher Course # 1:		Date Cont. Ed. Course # 1:	
Date Refresher Course # 2:		Date Cont. Ed. Course # 2:	
Date Refresher Course # 3:		Date Cont. Ed. Course # 3:	
Date Refresher Course # 4:		Date Cont. Ed. Course # 4:	
Date Drill # 1:		Date Activation #1:	
Date Drill # 2:		Date Activation #2:	
Date Drill # 3:		Date Activation #3:	

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

Maintaining a CERT Program - Step 4: Maintaining Records

Sample Expression of Interest Record

You may want to use a spreadsheet to track contacts with potential volunteers and others who express interest in your CERT program. A sample spreadsheet is shown below.

Sample Expression of Interest Record							
Last Name	First Name	Street	City	Zip	Phone	Request Date	Response Date

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

Maintaining a CERT Program - Step 4: Maintaining Records

Marketing Contacts Worksheet

You may want to use a spreadsheet to help you track your marketing contacts. A sample spreadsheet is shown below.

CERT Marketing Contacts								
Last Name	**First Name**	**Organization**	**Street Address**	**City**	**Zip**	**Phone**	**Email**	**Meeting Date**
Gould	Alisa	Volunteer Alliance	123 Main Street	Riverside	12222	540-790-8321	Agould@ va.org	03/21/03

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

Maintaining a CERT Program - Step 4: Maintaining Records

Sample Instructor Background Questionnaire

You may want to use a questionnaire to gather information about potential instructors. A sample questionnaire is shown on the next page.

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

Maintaining a CERT Program - Step 4: Maintaining Records

Sample Instructor Background Questionnaire

CERT INSTRUCTOR BACKGROUND QUESTIONNAIRE

Name:	
Address:	**Work Phone:**
	Home Phone:
	Fax:
Employer:	**Email Address: (if available)**

PLACE A CHECK NEXT TO ALL AREAS THAT YOU HAVE PAST EXPERIENCE.

☐ CERT Program
☐ Fire safety and fire suppression
☐ Hazardous materials safety
☐ Emergency medical triage & treatment
☐ Search & rescue techniques and markings

☐ Incident Command System (ICS) operations
☐ Disaster psychology
☐ Exercise controller
☐ Other: (List)

Please list your past training presentation experience.

Place a check next to all areas that you wish to be considered for.

☐ Lead Instructor
☐ Co-Instructor for:
☐ Emergency Preparedness
☐ Fire Safety/Hazardous Materials
☐ Emergency Medical Operations

☐ Exercise Safety Officer
☐ Light Search and Rescue
☐ Disaster Psychology

Your Signature:	**Date:**

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

Maintaining a CERT Program - Step 4: Maintaining Records

Sample Instructor Record

You may want to use a spreadsheet to help maintain instructor information records. A sample spreadsheet is shown below.

Sample Instructor Record						
Last Name	**First Name**	**Street**	**City**	**Zip**	**Training Area(s)**	**Train-the-Trainer Completion Date**

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

Maintaining a CERT Program - Step 4: Maintaining Records

Sample Registration Form

You may want to use a registration form to identify individuals interested in attending CERT training. A sample registration form is shown below.

COMMUNITY EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM (CERT) TRAINING/SPRING 2003

I would like to register for the eight-session CERT training and would like to attend:

☐ Wednesday evenings [DATES HERE]

☐ Saturday mornings [DATES HERE]

☐ I am unable to attend the training this spring, but please contact me about future CERT training.

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY:

NAME:

STREET ADDRESS:

CITY:	STATE:	ZIP:

NEAREST CROSS STREET TO YOUR HOME ADDRESS:

TELEPHONE (DAY):	(EVENING):

EMAIL AT WHICH YOU WANT TO RECEIVE CERT INFORMATION:

Please mail this form (one registration per form, please) to:

[ADDRESS HERE].

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE **[COMMUNITY]** CERT PROGRAM, PLEASE CHECK **[WEB ADDRESS]** OR CALL **[TELEPHONE CONTACT NUMBER]**.

CERT Community Emergency Response Teams

Sample Training Schedule

You may want to use a spreadsheet to create a CERT training schedule. A sample spreadsheet is shown below.

Sample CERT Training Schedule								
Class Title	Session	Date	Location	Begin Time	End Time	Instructor	Co-Instructor	Safety Officer