



## A little about CERT.

### **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.

### **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.