

## You're On Your Own!

### An Introduction to the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT)

#### Did you know ...?

- ❖ 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

### City of Palm Bay Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Program

The **City of Palm Bay Office of Emergency Preparedness (OEP)** has become a part of a national network of **CERT** communities. **OEP** 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 or Government CERT:**  
Co-workers serving places of business and surrounding areas, or county, municipal, or state agency employees
- **School CERT:** Faculty and staff serving a particular school and the surrounding areas.
- **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. 16 years and older.

**Individuals not affiliated with a team may still be trained and serve the Palm Bay 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 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 32 hours of classes in the following areas to become certified. Classes are scheduled to accommodate the needs of each team and are available at convenient times.

#### 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 city.

**Disaster Simulation:** A small-scale disaster simulation 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.

## 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?

**CERT** is for 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 City of Palm Bay Office of Emergency Preparedness at: (321) 952-3400 Ext. 4504  
or E-mail to: [schulm@palmbayflorida.org](mailto:schulm@palmbayflorida.org)

### The CERT Information Line:

(321) 952-3400 Ext. 4504 - This information line will make available training schedules and other information relevant to the CERT program

### CERT WEBSITE RESOURCES:

**City of Palm Bay Office of Emergency Preparedness**  
Program information and emergency preparedness tips  
[schulm@palmbayflorida.org](mailto:schulm@palmbayflorida.org)

### Federal Emergency Management Agency:

<http://www.fema.gov/emi/cert>

Information about the National CERT program and links to other CERT sites

## 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.  
Contact the Palm Bay Fire Department at 321-409-6300
- **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.



**CITY OF PALM BAY**

**OFFICE OF  
EMERGENCY  
PREPAREDNESS**

**Palm Bay Fire Department**