

NORTH DAKOTA

Highlights of State Council Activities

North Dakota's First Lady Mikey Hoeven chairs the North Dakota Citizen Corps Council (NDCCC), serving as the chief spokesperson and advocate in promoting Citizen Corps efforts within the state. Other members include representatives from the following agencies: Police Chiefs Association, Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD), National Guard Family Readiness Program, Rural Development Council, Firefighters Association, Association of Counties, Indian Affairs Commission, State Fire Marshal, Medical Association, Peace Officers Association, Fire Chiefs Association, Emergency Management Association, 911 Association and the EMS Association

In 2005, the NDCCC focused on researching the Teen CERT program as well as discussing the possibility of integrating Medical Reserve Corps with North Dakota's Public Health Emergency Volunteer Reserve (PHEVR) program.

Highlights of State Activities

Public Education and Outreach

The diversity of the North Dakota CERT program is extensive. North Dakota has trained community classes and businesses, as well as North Dakota State University staff and vice presidents, church members, state employees, city employees, and Retired and Senior Volunteer (RSVP) members.

On New Year's Eve, students from a youth group in Minot were sledding and collided with rocks, poles, and each other, injuring 32 kids. The group's bus driver, who had been CERT-trained through his employer, saw what was happening and called 911. He had all the kids triaged and administered medical attention before the ambulance even arrived. He gives CERT credit for knowing what to do.

Training and Exercises

Nearly all North Dakota communities that participate in CERT involve their volunteers in local full-scale exercises. Williams County Citizen Corps, located in the Northwest of the State, drove CERT volunteers to neighboring McKenzie County to participate in an exercise, causing the McKenzie emergency manager to realize the importance and value of CERT. McKenzie County Citizen Corps completed its first class in April 2006.

In February, the North Dakota Citizen Corps hosted a training event called "CERT Strategies for Success." CERT trainers and coordinators from across the state gathered to learn about disaster simulations, North Dakota partners, and how to more effectively market their programs.

Volunteer Programs and Support

February 2005

In June 2005, both Dickey County and Cass County activated CERT teams to sandbag homes and businesses. Dickey County, which cross-trains CERT members in shelter management, also used them in the shelter function. Cass County tested their phone tree and called 101 CERT members in 15 minutes.

Support for Hurricane Katrina Response

The North Dakota Citizen Corps office worked with the state Department of Emergency Services and VOAD to develop plans to house Hurricane Katrina evacuees in September. One of the needs identified in the evacuee placement planning was a bank of volunteers who would have a single focus -- to provide hospitality to individuals as soon as they stepped into the reception center. The governor's task force was looking for a group of volunteers who could be available simply to serve the immediate needs of evacuees and North Dakota CERT volunteers were happy to assist. The task force's plan was exercised in 2006, with CERT volunteers contributing to its success.

National Preparedness Month

The governor declared September as State Preparedness Month. In addition, 30,000 "Get a Kit. Make a plan. Be informed" magnets and "Are You Ready?" brochures were distributed through the county emergency managers. Five news releases were issued to publicize the importance of personal, family, business and school preparedness. Representatives from North Dakota Citizen Corps' Homeland Security Training and Exercise Program also presented a program to city leaders on how to make their offices disaster-resistant.

In Fargo, Domino's Pizza partnered with the local CERT program to distribute 8,000 flyers on preparedness. The flyers were taped on the top of each box that went out for delivery. Fargo CERT participants also aided in getting preparedness information into the Fargo Chamber of Commerce and Fargo public schools' newsletter and constructed a booth for the preparedness fair at the local mall. They also partnered with Wal-Mart to create a preparedness display as well as conduct a drawing for a free preparedness kit.

Many other communities across North Dakota conducted activities such as distributing "Are You Ready?" books or brochures as well as talking with communities and schools about the importance of being prepared.