

# Community Emergency Response Team




Department of Homeland Security  
Emergency Preparedness and Response Directorate  
FEMA

# Unit Objectives

- ◆ Describe the types of hazards to which your community is vulnerable.
- ◆ Describe the functions of CERTs.
- ◆ Identify preparedness steps.





# Preparing for a Disaster

## CERTs should prepare by:

- ◆ Identifying potential hazards in their homes and workplaces.
- ◆ Reducing hazards, where possible.
- ◆ Developing a disaster supply kit.



# Responding To a Disaster

CERTs should respond by:

- ◆ Locating and turning off utilities, if safe.
- ◆ Extinguishing small fires.
- ◆ Treating injuries.
- ◆ Conducting light search and rescue.
- ◆ Helping to relieve survivor stress.



# Nondisaster CERT Roles

CERT members can:

- ◆ Distribute preparedness materials.
- ◆ Staff first aid booths at special events.
- ◆ Assist with installation of smoke alarms.



# Citizen Corps

- ◆ The President has encouraged Americans to volunteer to improve and safeguard the nation.
- ◆ Areas of emphasis for volunteer efforts:
  - Crime
  - Natural Disasters
  - Terrorism





# Additional CERT Training Opportunities

- ◆ Shelter management
- ◆ Community relations
- ◆ Donations management
- ◆ Special needs concerns
- ◆ Debris removal
- ◆ Utilities control
- ◆ Advanced first aid
- ◆ Automated External Defibrillator use
- ◆ CPR Skills

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# Course Preview

The scope of this course includes:

- ◆ Fire safety.
- ◆ Disaster medical operations.
- ◆ Light search and rescue.
- ◆ CERT organization.
- ◆ Disaster psychology.
- ◆ CERTs and terrorism.

# Types of Disasters

- ◆ Natural
- ◆ Manmade
- ◆ Technological



# Key Elements of Disasters

- ◆ They are relatively unexpected.
- ◆ Emergency personnel may be overwhelmed.
- ◆ Lives, health, and the environment are endangered.



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# Effects on Infrastructure

## Damage to transportation:

- ◆ Inability to assess damage accurately
- ◆ Ambulances prevented from reaching victims
- ◆ Police prevented from reaching areas of civil unrest
- ◆ Fire departments prevented from getting to fires
- ◆ Interruption to the flow of needed supplies

# Effects on Infrastructure

## Damage to structures:

- ◆ Damaged hospitals unable to function normally
- ◆ Increased risk of damage from falling debris



# Effects on Infrastructure

Disrupted communication:

- ◆ Victims unable to call for help
- ◆ Coordination of services hampered



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# Effects on Infrastructure

## Damage to utilities:

- ◆ Loss of utilities
- ◆ Increased risk of fire or electrical shock
- ◆ Loss of contact between victims and service providers
- ◆ Inadequate water supply
- ◆ Increased risk to public health

# Effects on Infrastructure

Damage to fuel supplies:

- ◆ Increased risk of fire or explosion from fuel line rupture
- ◆ Risk of asphyxiation



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# Hazards From Home Fixtures

- ◆ Gas line ruptures from displaced water heaters or ranges
- ◆ Damage from falling books, dishes, and other cabinet contents
- ◆ Electric shock from displaced appliances
- ◆ Fire from faulty wiring, overloaded plugs, or frayed electric cords

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# Personal Safety

Personal safety measures vary depending on:

- ◆ The type of event.
- ◆ The amount of warning available.
- ◆ Location during the event (i.e., inside, outside, driving).

# Home/Workplace Preparedness

- ◆ Structural and nonstructural hazard mitigation
- ◆ Individual preparedness:
  - Assemble disaster supplies.
  - Develop a disaster plan.
  - Develop a safe room.



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# Sample Structural Hazard Mitigation

- ◆ Bolt older houses to the foundations.
- ◆ Strap propane tanks.
- ◆ Raise utilities.
- ◆ Strap mobile homes to their slabs.
- ◆ Ask a professional to check foundation, roof connectors, chimney, etc.

An American flag graphic is located in the top-left corner of the slide, featuring stars and stripes. The title "Sample Nonstructural Hazard Mitigation" is written in a large, dark blue, serif font across the top of the slide.

# Sample Nonstructural Hazard Mitigation

- ◆ Anchor heavy furniture.
- ◆ Secure appliances and office equipment.
- ◆ Secure cabinet doors with childproof fasteners.
- ◆ Locate and label gas, electricity, and water shutoffs.
- ◆ Secure water heaters and have flexible gas lines installed.

The top-left corner of the slide features a graphic of the American flag, showing the stars and stripes in a curved, draped manner.

# The EOP

- ◆ Assigns responsibility to organizations and individuals
- ◆ Sets forth lines of authority
- ◆ Describes how people and property will be protected
- ◆ Identifies personnel, equipment, facilities, supplies, and other resources

# CERTs in a Disaster Setting

- ◆ Assist first responders when requested
- ◆ Initially assume many of the same functions as response personnel when necessary until help arrives:
  - Fire safety
  - Light search and rescue
  - Disaster medical operations



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# Unit Summary

- ◆ CERTs are among a variety of agencies and personnel who cooperate to provide assistance in the aftermath of a disaster.
- ◆ CERTs have proven themselves invaluable in the areas in which they were tested.
- ◆ CERTs have become a key component of the Citizen Corps program.