

“Helping your Citizens Help Emergency Services”

Presented by the:
Metro West Fire Protection District
of St. Louis County, Missouri

Presentation for the IAEM Conference 2007



Presenters

- Bob Reboulet
 - Chairman, Board of Directors
Metro West Fire Protection District
- Edward Beirne
 - Battalion Chief, Chief Training Officer, Paramedic & “A Shift” Commander
- Michael Thiemann
 - Coordinator of Community Services & Disaster Preparedness

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Overview

- Metro West CERT was established in September of 2003 through a Board initiated project.
- In September & October of 2003 56 citizens were trained.
- The main focus for the implementation of CERT was to:
 - Increase our communities level of preparedness
 - Provide a way for residents to become more involved in a pre and post disaster environment.



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*Metro West
FireFighters*



Bob Reboulet

- Chairman, Director Board of Directors, Since 1998
- Retired, Regional Manager of Midwest Region for Eastman Kodak Company



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Fire / Rescue and EMS

But that is not all...

- We are a large suburban Fire Protection District that needs our citizens to help when the catastrophic incident impacts us.
- No agency can take care of everything alone.
- The Organization asked, “what can citizen volunteers do to help us”. The answers have proven to be innumerable and extremely beneficial.

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New problems, New tactics

- 9/11 made emergency officials think about how we were involving our communities in their preparedness.
- Metro West Board Members realized that it is our responsibility to provide a method for citizens to become better prepared.
- To achieve this CERT training was implemented as the main adult preparedness program in the Metro West Fire District jurisdiction.



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Empowering Employees both Paid and Volunteer

- The Board of Directors feel that it is critical to empower those responsible for Citizen Corps Council Activities with access to training, funding and necessary resources with limited restrictions.
- Volunteers with power can accomplish great things for the Citizen Corps initiative.



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Michael Thiemann

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Phone - 636.458.2100 Extension 118

- Coordinator of Community Services & Disaster Preparedness
- Secretary, Board of Directors, Gateway Citizen Corps Coalition
- Treasurer, Meramec Valley Citizen Corps Council
- CERT Instructor Trainer Missouri Emergency Management Agency



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Local Program

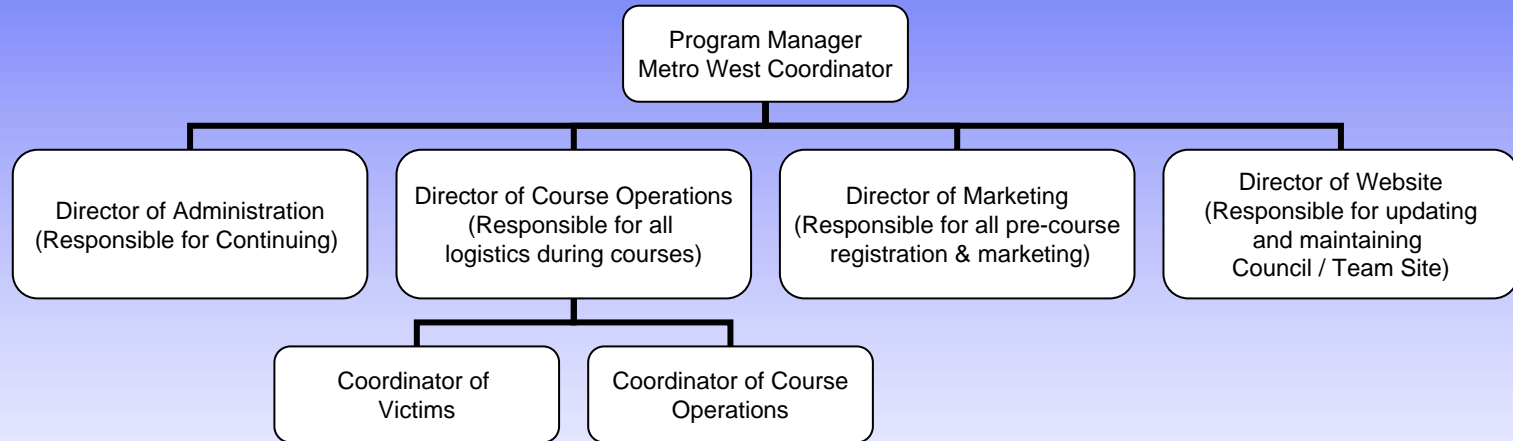
- Metro West CERT
 - Outstanding response with simple marketing in 2003-2005
 - As simple marketing started to become more challenging we moved to faith based groups for captured larger audiences.
- Volunteers from 2003 courses were appointed to new leadership positions.



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Metro West CERT Organizational Chart



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Success brings friends...

- Neighboring emergency service agencies became interested as their citizens discussed this training with friends and colleagues.
- The Citizen Corps Council concept was implemented for our area.
 - We now have nine jurisdictions for a majority of St. Louis County covered by the Meramec Valley Citizens Corps Council.



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How do we fund these programs?

- Grant Funding Success
 - State CERT and Citizen Corps Council Grants were obtained for Metro West and it's Citizen Corps Council Partners
 - Private clubs such as Rotary, JC's and others began to donate to make the program a success.
 - Urban Area Security Initiative and Federal Homeland Security funding has overtaken this initiative for our area.



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Volunteers Making the Difference

- Over 700 volunteers make each of the upcoming courses successful.
- Leadership volunteers are responsible for more than just stuff you don't want to do.
- Their energy for helping is tremendous.
- They have skills that are sometimes hard to find in the emergency services field.

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Making a Regional Impact

- As Councils were established it was determined that to create consistency we should volunteer to create a working group to:
 - Make sure that continuing education training was available to every graduate
 - Help with large scale refresher exercises
 - Continue to assist startup councils and programs

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Another Layer in the System

- The Gateway Citizen Corps Coalition was established to address these issues.
 - The Coalition is made up of volunteer program managers from each of the geographical areas covered by our UASI Region.
 - They have been responsible for the funneling of \$275k in the 2006 UASI funding and have proposed \$900k for 2007.



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Making the System Work

- Trust them when you give them the responsibility.
- Clearly define their role, responsibility and authority.
- Provide them with the tools necessary to accomplish your goals.
- Reap the rewards.

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Edward M. Beirne

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Phone - 636.458.2100 Extension 134

- Battalion Chief / A Shift Commander
- Paramedic
- CERT Instructor
- Emergency Management Director for Fire District
- Chief Training Officer



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Bringing it together when seconds count...

- Information gatherers
 - Accurate, reliable & timely
- Integrate volunteers during disaster response will make the difference. You choose the outcome.
- 110 Paramedic / Firefighters, 5 stations, 57 ½ square miles 140,000 residents...trained and prepared residents are critical.



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Experiences

- Hurricane Katrina, National and Local Responses
 - Volunteers Deployed to Gulf Coast.
 - Thousands of Volunteers prepared three mass intake and housing shelters for displaced residents.
 - Thousands of Spontaneous Unaffiliated Volunteers wanted to help.
 - Phone bank for sudden influx of calls related to assistance.
- July 2006 Storms / Power Failures
- January 2007 Ice Storms / Power Failures

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Summary

- Volunteers are critical to the stabilization of a disaster response.
- Volunteers WILL show up. Citizen Corps Councils and CERT provide you with knowledge about them and them about how they can become prepared to help when the time comes.
- Trained Volunteers have been used successfully to help maintain, grow and manage Councils and CERT Teams.



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Questions

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Thank you for coming

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