



# 2009 Citizen Corps Annual Report

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# 2009 Citizen Corps Annual Report: Community Preparedness Division

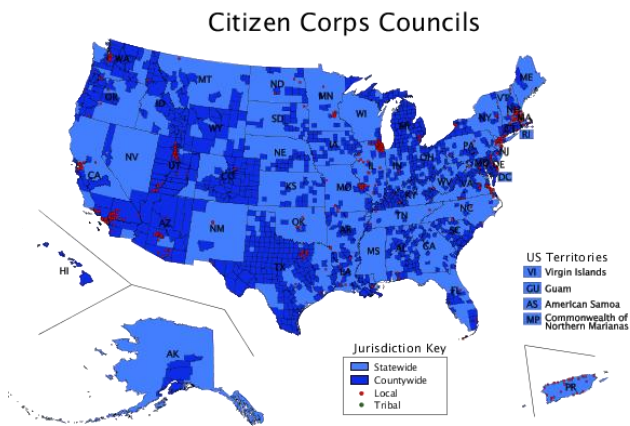
## Community Preparedness Division ~ Citizen Corps

Following the attacks of September 11, 2001, an Executive Order was issued on November 9, 2001, to identify ways “to support and enhance the efforts of the American public with respect to preparedness and volunteerism in the war on terrorism.” Mindful of the increased risk of terrorism, as well as vulnerabilities to natural disasters, hazardous materials, and public safety threats, the resulting strategic policy was an all-hazards approach to citizen preparedness and participation.



On January 29, 2002, Citizen Corps was created and operational responsibility was assigned to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), currently administered by the Community Preparedness Division (CPD) within the National Preparedness Directorate. Citizen Corps is the FEMA’s nationwide grassroots strategy to achieve greater community safety, preparedness, and resilience. This past year, Citizen Corps set distinct priorities in several areas, including: the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Program, National Citizen Corps Affiliates, United We Serve, National Preparedness Month, communications and outreach, and research in citizen and community preparedness.

The Citizen Corps strategy is designed to strengthen collaboration between government and community leaders from all sectors to engage the full community in preparedness, planning, mitigation, response, and recovery. Although Citizen Corps is administered nationally, its focus, scope, and impact center on local communities and members of communities who are making efforts to prepare themselves, their families, and their community as a whole.



Over 2,400 State, local, Tribal, Territorial, and Regional Citizen Corps Councils have registered, representing jurisdictions that serve 79 percent of the United States population. CPD helps local jurisdictions by providing Citizen Corps Councils with tools and resources to advance the common goal of community resiliency. Many of these tools and resources are available to Citizen Corps Councils through partnerships with national organizations and volunteer Program Partners.

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CPD promotes five national Citizen Corps Program Partners through partnerships with other Federal agencies and national organizations. The five programs—Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT), Medical Reserve Corps (MRC), Fire Corps, USA on Watch/Neighborhood Watch, and Volunteers in Police Service (VIPS)—provide

national resources for outreach, training and exercising, and volunteer service to support local emergency service providers. The countless acts of volunteers capture the spirit of service and help support government efforts to make communities safer, stronger and better prepared for the catastrophes to come.

Citizen Corps Affiliate Programs and Organizations offer communities resources for public education, outreach, and training; represent volunteers interested in helping to make their community safer; or offer volunteer service opportunities to support first responders, disaster relief activities, and community safety efforts. Citizen Corps currently works in partnership with 27 national Affiliates to promote community preparedness.

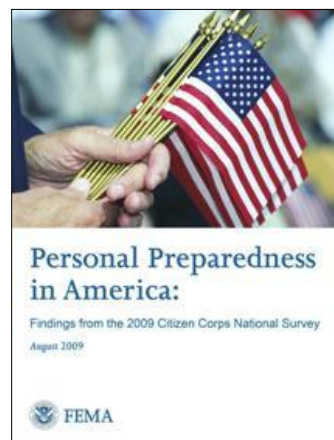
### **Research, Information Sharing, and Resources**

**Research:** To support the Citizen Corps mission, CPD conducts primary research, analyzes research conducted by others, and identifies tools and resources with local application in relation to personal and community preparedness in the United States. In 2009, CPD released three new reports outlining the findings from household surveys conducted on personal preparedness in 2007 and 2009:

- Personal Preparedness In America: Findings From the 2007 Citizen Corps National Survey (June 2009)
- Personal Preparedness In America: Findings From the 2007 Citizen Corps Survey of Four Urban Areas (June 2009)
- Personal Preparedness in America: Findings from the 2009 Citizen Corps National Survey (August 2009)

These reports offers comprehensive data on the public's thoughts, perceptions, and behaviors related to preparedness and community safety for multiple types of hazards. Findings from these surveys provide valuable insights for increasing personal preparedness, civic engagement, and community resilience in the United States. Results from these studies have important implications for the development of more effective communication and outreach strategies to achieve greater levels of preparedness and participation. Suggested strategies based on this data include:

- Stress that preparedness is a shared responsibility.
- Provide more specificity on preparedness actions.



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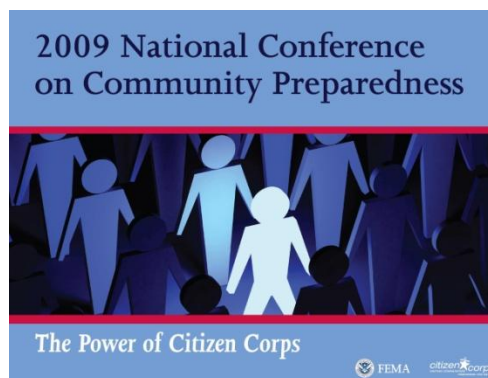
- Highlight additional preparedness needs for people with disabilities.
- Emphasize the importance of drills and exercises.
- Offer specialized information on the survivability of manmade disasters.
- Couple a national voice with local specificity.

In addition to conducting research, CPD tracks the research of others and maintains the Citizen Corps Citizen Preparedness Surveys Database, a compilation of surveys on personal and business preparedness conducted since September 11, 2001; there are currently over 140 surveys included in the database. CPD uses the surveys included in this database to assess trends in research and trends in preparedness throughout the nation. CPD then publishes Citizen Corps Citizen Preparedness Reviews to present the analysis of these trends and to present independent CPD research and modeling. To date there are five published Citizen Preparedness Reviews.

CPD preparedness research findings, preparedness reviews, and the survey database are available online at <http://www.citizencorps.gov/ready/research.shtm>.

National Conference on Community Preparedness: The 2009 National Conference on Community Preparedness: *The Power of Citizen Corps* was hosted by CPD on August 9-13, 2009, in Arlington, VA. The conference was open to all who are interested in making their communities safer, stronger, and better prepared for all types of hazards. The conference brought together approximately 850 state and local elected officials, emergency management professionals, police and fire services, public health and emergency medical services, non-governmental organizations, private business and industry, advocacy groups, and members of the public.

This conference enabled attendees to share best practices on collaborative emergency planning, discuss preparedness outreach and education for targeted populations, learn innovative approaches to funding, hear updates on DHS/FEMA initiatives, get updates on findings from citizen preparedness research, network with other Citizen Corps participants and much more. It featured over 100 presentations and 160 speakers providing the latest updates and best practices on community preparedness from across the nation. In addition, several distinguished guests spoke during the conference, including: Jane Holl Lute, W. Craig Fugate, Tim Manning, Russ Decker, David Maxwell, Dr. Richard Hatchett, Amanda Ripley, and Bruce Lockwood. Attendees were also provided an opportunity to attend one of eight preparedness 4 or 8-hour training and information workshops that included topics such as planning for children in disasters, neighborhood watch capability building, engaging the private sector, and psychological first aid training. Finally, two roundtable discussions were hosted during the conference. The first discussion included representatives from CPD and the National Citizen Corps Partners and Affiliates. Its purpose was to discuss ways to increase collaboration among the organizations and exchange best practices. The



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second discussion involved NPD and CPD leadership, members of the National Emergency Manager's Association (NEMA), and board members of the International Association of Emergency Managers (IAEM). This discussion focused on increasing collaboration between local emergency managers and Citizen Corps Councils and partners across the nation.

CitizenCorps.gov and Social Media: In 2009, CPD redesigned CitizenCorps.gov and announced the addition of several new social media tools to assist in information sharing and collaboration with Citizen Corps Councils across the nation and to assist citizens with getting involved in Citizen Corps and community preparedness in their local communities. New features included an email subscription service, web banners, RSS feeds, widgets, and Citizen Corps Twitter. In addition, CPD began actively participating in information sharing via the FEMA Facebook and YouTube pages. At the end of 2009, CPD also began hosting free, online webinars on community preparedness topics via the Homeland Security Information Network (HSIN) and introduced *The Citizen Corps Blog and Discussion Forum*.



- Citizen Corps Email Subscription Service: In January of 2009, CPD began offering an email subscription service that allows any visitor to the CitizenCorps.gov website to register to receive Citizen Corps News updates and updates during disasters in their local area. This new tool greatly increased the efficiency of communicating with Citizen Corps stakeholders and enhanced transparency and collaboration on community preparedness among citizens. Currently, there are over 54,500 subscribers that receive the Citizen Corps News via this service. Subscribers typically receive two-three information updates each week and include Citizen Corps members, local volunteers, government officials, and others interested in community preparedness.

- Citizen Corps Web Banners: Web banners are graphic files that can be used by individuals to link from their website to CitizenCorps.gov. These banners are free and are available in several styles and sizes.

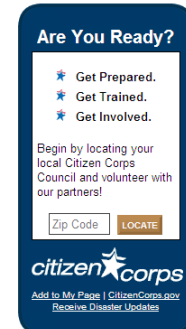


- Citizen Corps RSS Feeds: RSS feeds provide subscribers with automated updated information through user-defined applications without having to continually visit CitizenCorps.gov. These RSS feeds can be imported into self-made widgets and many other social media sites. CitizenCorps.gov currently offers two RSS feeds: the *National Community Preparedness News Feed*, which provides updates on

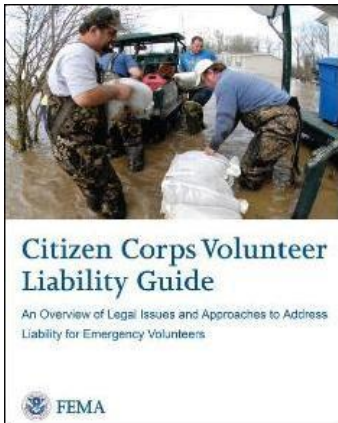
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community preparedness activities and resources from federal government and national Citizen Corps partner sources, and the *Local Citizen Corps in the News Feed*, which provides updates on activities and events of local Citizen Corps Councils from across the nation.

- **Citizen Corps Widgets:** Widgets are web tools that can be put on a webpage, blog, and social media sites. Citizen Corps' widgets are free and display information provided by CPD through continually updated data feeds. CitizenCorps.gov currently offers three widgets in several sizes.
- **Citizen Corps Twitter:** Twitter is a microblog that gives CPD the opportunity to provide users with specific community preparedness information in a timely manner. Current followers of the Citizen\_Corps Twitter account include Citizen Corps Councils and partners, the emergency management community, and the general public.



**Citizen Corps Volunteer Liability Guide:** Engaging the public is a critical part of Citizen Corps' mission. Well-trained volunteers supplement governmental resources in all phases of emergency management. Identifying and supporting policy and practice that



promote and strengthen public participation is, therefore, an important element of Citizen Corps' implementation. CPD has learned from Citizen Corps Councils, volunteer program managers, and volunteers that liability is a significant concern and a potential barrier to volunteer involvement in emergency services. Liability—legal responsibility for one's acts or omissions—includes diverse concerns: legally imposed payment of damages for personal injury or property damage; penalties for practicing a profession or trade without the required license or permit; compensation for lost income and medical expenses of an injured volunteer; and damages for breach of contract. To offer guidance in this area, CPD developed the Citizen Corps Volunteer Liability Guide

(CCVLG) to provide an overview of liability and to suggest some approaches to addressing these concerns. The guide is available online at

[http://www.citizencorps.gov/councils/volunteer\\_mgmt.shtm](http://www.citizencorps.gov/councils/volunteer_mgmt.shtm).

**Community Preparedness Toolkit:** In the summer of 2009, President Barack Obama called on Americans to participate in our nation's recovery and renewal by volunteering in our local communities. To encourage individuals to volunteer and develop their own "do-it-yourself" projects that could help prepare communities for disasters, CPD teamed up with the Corporation for National and Community Service to provide citizens with a Community Preparedness Toolkit on [Serve.gov](http://www.serve.gov). This new Community Preparedness Toolkit helps citizens create a service project to prepare their family, friends, neighbors, and colleagues for disasters in their local community. The toolkit is available online at <http://www.serve.gov/toolkits/disaster/>.

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Girl Scout Preparedness Patch Program: The Girl Scout Council of the Nation’s Capital and CPD partnered to develop a new Girl Scout patch program to provide information and activities in emergency preparedness appropriate for all levels of Scouts, from Daisy through Ambassador. The patch program raises public awareness about personal preparedness, training, and volunteer service to support emergency services and community safety and motivates young women to become leaders in their communities in the fields of emergency management and emergency response. More information on the Girl Scout’s Preparedness Patch can be found at: <http://www.gscnc.org/dhs.html>.



Voluntary Private Sector Preparedness Accreditation and Certification Program (PS-Prep): Throughout 2009, CPD has collaborated with DHS and FEMA’s Private Sector Offices to provide new standards for a 9/11 Commission-recommended program for the private sector to improve preparedness for disasters and emergencies. PS-Prep is a partnership between with the private sector that enables private entities—including businesses, non-profit organizations and universities—to receive emergency preparedness certification from a DHS accreditation system created in coordination with the private sector. The new PS-Prep standards will enhance operational resilience, business continuity management, and disaster and emergency management among participating private sector partners and will help ensure our private sector partners have the information and training they need to respond to disasters.



Personal and Community Preparedness Publications: CPD manages over two dozen personal and community preparedness education and outreach materials including publications, pamphlets, DVDs, and audio tapes that are available for free to the public. These materials include a 200-page guide titled “*Are You Ready? An In-depth Guide to Citizen Preparedness*”, children activity books, hazard-specific information fact sheets, tips on how to prepare for a disaster, information on handling food and water during a disaster, and many more. Each year over 2.5 million of these materials are distributed across the nation via Citizen Corps partners and

Joint Field Offices.

Grant Funding: To provide financial resources to state and local governments, CPD works closely with FEMA’s Grant Programs Directorate to develop grant guidance for Citizen Corps Program grants and to ensure the grant application kits include clear guidance to states that a range of homeland security grants are eligible to be used to support Citizen Corps and community preparedness.

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### National Citizen Corps Achievement Awards

On August 11th at the 2009 National Conference on Community Preparedness, CPD announced the winners of the first National Citizen Corps Achievement Awards. Presented in eight categories, these awards recognize innovative practices and achievements of Citizen Corps Councils across the nation to make our communities



safer, stronger, and better prepared to manage any emergency situation. With over 2,400 registered Citizen Corps Councils nationwide, these award winners exemplify excellence in community emergency planning, foster successful public-private partnerships, prioritize collaboration, demonstrate creative and innovative local problem solving, and implement sound programs that can be modeled for use by other communities. Highlighting the contributions these communities are making to support emergency management efforts, the awards were presented by representatives of all levels of emergency management, FEMA Deputy Administrator Tim Manning, NEMA Incoming President David Maxwell, and IAEM President Russ Decker.

Award winners by category are as follows:

- 2009 Outstanding State/Territory Citizen Corps Initiatives Award - New Jersey State Citizen Corps Council: The New Jersey State Citizen Corps Council is comprised of government leaders from State, county, municipal agencies, educators, and business executives from the private sector, civic and volunteer organizations. The State Council manages 200 local Citizen Corps Councils in

New Jersey which span the entire State, leaving no area unrepresented. One highlight of this Council was their September training and exercise event that brought together State and local offices of emergency management, State and local Citizen



Corps Council leaders, the American Red Cross, Salvation Army, police, fire, EMS, and over 800 CERT and MRC volunteers. The volunteers played an active role in an exercise involving the response to a simulated bus event where trained volunteers were tasked to extricate victims from the wreck. Additionally, the volunteers completed ICS training, attended preparedness seminars, and taught courses involving disaster preparedness.




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- 2009 Outstanding Tribal Citizen Corps Council Award - United Tribes Technical College Citizen Corps Council (ND): The United Tribes Technical College Citizen Corps Council (UTTC) became the first tribal organization to implement a CERT Program and has subsequently trained nearly 500 people on seven reservations in North and South Dakota. Preparedness and response training has progressed with the involvement of students, staff, and faculty. Teams of volunteers are trained to support the surrounding tribal schools and communities, and their efforts continue to grow. In addition, UTTC organized the first Citizen Corps Council on each of the North Dakota reservations.
- 2009 Outstanding Citizen Corps Council Award Serving a Population Under 1.5 million - Denton County Citizen Corps Council (TX): The Denton County Citizen Corps Council also serves as the county's Volunteer Organizations Active in Disasters (VOAD) and membership is made up of businesses, nonprofits, faith-based organizations, emergency management, public health, government, and the general public. Throughout the past year, Council members participated in public outreach drills, exercises, and collaboration on establishing a CERT/MRC Area's Command Center to better integrate volunteer response capabilities. The MRC unit led the *Prepared Denton County Campaign* and CERT distributed "Know What To Do" regional preparedness materials. In addition, the Council worked hard to ensure that the Fire Corps, CERT, MRC, and VOAD units are written into Denton's Emergency Operations Plan and performed preparedness outreach to hearing impaired, learning disabled, obese, physically challenged and economically disadvantaged, seniors and cultural diverse peoples in their communities. In 2008, Hurricanes Gustav and Ike tested the Council's resiliency as CERT and MRC volunteers were called upon to manage the Denton Shelter, made sure all populations' needs were addressed and coordinated with the Gainesville Zoo to accommodate pets, including two elephants. Council programs also joined forces to create an information desk and an 800 number to help the hurricane evacuees.
- 2009 Outstanding Citizen Corps Council Award Serving a Population Over 1.5 million - Sacramento Region Citizen Corps Council (CA): The Sacramento Region Citizen Corps Council successfully conducted a full-scale county-wide exercise, increased the number of trained residents by over 1700, provided specialized training for youth and for persons over 55, participated in a state-wide and regional exercise, standardized identification of level one and two CERT members, conducted 900 health screenings at mostly Hispanic health fairs, distributed 5,000 disaster booklets to vulnerable populations, developed an Emergency Volunteer Center Operations Plan and Training Manual, and worked with numerous partners to implement preparedness programs to significantly increase their number of volunteers.



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- 2009 Collaborative Preparedness Planning Award - Cottonwood Heights Citizen Corps (UT): The Cottonwood Heights Citizen Corps partners with the United Fire Authority, Amateur Radio Emergency Services, Radio Amateur Civilian Emergency Services, Salt Lake County EOC, and Rocky Mountain Power to increase preparedness in their community. In just two years, the Council moved from having one written emergency preparedness plan and few CERT members to implementing an emergency communication annex across the county. In addition, Cottonwood Heights Citizen Corps designed and conducted disaster drills to increase communication on the status of all homes needing medical attention and supplied this data to the city's geographical information system. The Citizen Corps also worked with local city officials to distribute colored streamers that correspond to the CERT triage system so that first responders can respond accurately during a disaster and ensured two safety frequencies were reserved to ensure clear communications.
- 2009 Preparing the Public Award - Farmington Hills / Farmington Citizen Corps Council (MI): The Farmington Hills/Farmington Citizen Corps spearheaded several preparedness activities this past year that increased resiliency in their community, including: creating instructional DVDs; hosting televised citywide public forums; working with local TV personalities to produce cable shows on emergency topics such as terrorism, first aid, and school safety; hosting free first aid courses at a local hospital; distributing information packets and emergency kits; providing self-defense classes designed for children and the elderly; publishing monthly articles on preparedness in their three local newspapers; participating in two large-scale training exercises coordinated by the Farmington Hills Fire Department; and publishing articles in conjunction with the National Homeland Security Consortium.
- 2009 Preparing Community Organizations Award - Duval County / Jacksonville Citizen Corps (FL): The Duval County/Jacksonville Citizen Corps Council has been actively engaged in their community over the past year to enhance preparedness of their citizens. The Council has over 650 MRC, neighbor watch, VIPs, and VOAD members and partners with the local police, EMS, fire, emergency planners, businesses, universities, and fraternities. Over the past year, the Council sponsored ICS courses, conducted more than 20 presentations on basic preparedness, and presented at the Northeast Florida Chapter Association of Contingency Planners. The Jacksonville CERT Program is strong and their recent activities included volunteering at the Annual Emergency Preparedness Conference for People with Disabilities, conducting nine CERT business emergency response team courses, volunteering in the first airport passenger evacuation exercise, and conducting training drills with the Jackson Fire and Rescue Department Training Academy.

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- 2009 Volunteer Integration Award - Harris County Citizen Corps Council (TX): Harris County Citizen Corps has fully embraced the value of trained disaster volunteers and has integrated them into government plans and protocols. Over the past year, Citizen Corps members paired with Emergency Operations Center (EOC) staff during disaster activations and drills, were integrated into the ICS structure, and assisted with testing “Operation Provide a Ride” to evaluate plans to evacuate special needs populations in the region. During the response to Hurricane Ike, disaster volunteers were integral to successful communication between neighboring EOCs and Points of Dispensing (PODs). The efforts of the disaster workers and volunteers enabled the delivery over 1.1 million gallons of water, almost 10.5 million pounds of ice, and over 2.8 million meals. In addition, the Harris County Spanish Language CERT class graduated its 5,000th graduate and to date over 17,800 area residents have been trained through CERT, VIPs, MRC, neighborhood watch, and Fire Corps.



### National Preparedness Month

The Department of Homeland Security’s efforts to promote community preparedness culminate every year in September with a focused effort to motivate and inform the public during National Preparedness Month (NPM).

NPM is a nationwide effort intended to encourage Americans to take simple steps to prepare for emergencies. In 2009, over 3,400 NPM Coalition Members across the nation worked to highlight the importance of emergency preparedness and promote individual involvement through events and activities during NPM. NPM coalition members consist of Citizen Corps Councils, non and for-profit national organizations, families, and individuals committed to creating a culture of preparedness through community planning and capacity building, outreach and education, training and exercises, and volunteer programs. NPM 2009 focused on changing perceptions about emergency preparedness and continuing to build a culture of preparedness across the nation.



Over 1,000 inspiring events and initiatives were held around the country throughout the month, with events including public preparedness fairs, special needs workshops, school preparedness events, public alert systems tests, community disaster drills and exercises, small business workshops, and multi-cultural workshops. Examples of local and state Citizen Corps events from 2009 include:

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- The Delaware Citizen Corps and its partners conducted the 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Delaware Family Emergency Preparedness with approximately 40 exhibitors including emergency responders, state agencies and volunteer organizations.
- The New Jersey Citizen Corps Council hosted “Operation Monmouth”, a joint Medical Reserve Corps and CERT disaster exercise/drill with over 200 participants.
- The Lehigh Valley, PA Iron Pigs Minor League Baseball Team, Lehigh County Citizen Corps and its partners hosted the Iron Pigs Community Safety Day at an Iron Pigs game. In addition, as part of the Get Ready 2009 Autumn Academy, the Lehigh Carbon Community College hosted a three Dimensional Table Top Drill in which teams problem-solved and worked together during a “critical event” in an environment that rehearsed coordination, command, communications and interoperability.
- The Iowa State Citizen Corps sponsored “Everyone Survives II, Building on Success, Johnston, Iowa”, a free symposium for emergency services providers and people with special needs to learn about practical tools and techniques, to find out what works, what doesn’t and what can be done to make it work better.
- The West Texas Medical Reserve Corps provided a presentation and exhibit for the September meeting of the El Paso Chapter of the Military Order of the World Wars. This third annual event included current recommendations on the H1N1 situation as well as general preparedness tips.
- The Colorado Citizen Corps hosted the pilot project for the “Preparedness on a Budget” with the local CBS affiliate with a month long promotion founded on the Preparedness on a Budget Top 10.
- The Utah Citizen Corps hosted a Ready Your Business event at the State Fair.
- The Southern Arizona Regional Citizen Corps Council, in conjunction with the Pima County Health Department, conducted a full-scale exercise involving five separate PODs in preparation for an H1N1 or other event. Approximately 200 volunteers participated.
- Members of the Guam CERT team participated in a “CERT Rodeo,” competing with each other and demonstrating their skills to other members of the public on critical tasks such as extinguishing small fires. Members of the Guam Homeland Security, Office of Civil Defense traveled to Saipan in neighboring CNMI to provide CERT train-the-trainer training and assist with CERT training.
- The Washington State Citizen Corps Council hosted the state-wide Northwest Citizen Corps Expo 2009. This annual disaster exercise, held at the Washington

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State Fire Training Academy, was coordinated with Seattle Children's Hospital, King County Office of Emergency Management, Snohomish County Department of Emergency Management and volunteers from CERT and MRC. The 325 attendees represented emergency management agencies, fire departments, faith based groups, American Legion posts, the private sector, the deaf community, and even international exchange students.

- On September 11, 2009, the first National Day of Remembrance and Service, the Alexandria, VA MRC and Alexandria Department of Health, with assistance from the Arlington, Peninsula, Greater Prince William and Rappahannock-Rapidan (VA) MRC units, hosted a flu vaccination clinic. During the two-hour event, more than 575 area students, faculty, community members, and volunteers received their seasonal flu vaccinations. The event brought Secretary of Health and Human Services Kathleen Sebelius, Congressman Jim Moran, Virginia Health Commissioner Dr. Karen Remley, and other local and state dignitaries to receive their vaccines, promote the MRC, thank volunteers, and remember the events of September 11, 2001.



### United We Serve

During the summer of 2009, President Barack Obama called on all Americans – young and old, from every background, all across this country – to participate in our nation's recovery and renewal by serving in our communities. As part of the Administration's call to service, *United We Serve (UWS)*, a summer service initiative occurred from June 22 and concluded with the National Day of Service and Remembrance on September 11. This year, there were five focus areas for UWS, one of which was "ensuring our communities are safe from disasters and our veterans and military families are supported."

**United We Serve**  
SERVE.GOV

UWS provided Citizen Corps Councils and partners an opportunity to continue their ongoing preparedness efforts while reaching out to new sectors of the community to build a larger community preparedness coalition. Citizen Corps Councils were asked to focus on four goals during UWS:

- Re-assess their Citizen Corps Council membership, roles and responsibilities;
- Review and update their local community emergency operations plan, including pandemic flu planning;
- Work with Citizen Corps partners and affiliates to increase disaster preparedness volunteer and training opportunities; and
- Encourage citizens to self-organize to discuss disaster preparedness and safety issues and to conduct a drill to practice their plans.

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DHS, FEMA, and CPD officials participated in several events and activities throughout the summer to support UWS. Beginning with DHS Secretary Janet Napolitano's support for community readiness in Orlando, FL, on June 22, where she worked with the Orlando Citizen Corps Council and volunteers to assemble CERT kits in preparation for hurricane season, and FEMA

Administrator W. Craig Fugate discussing the importance of service at a roundtable in Denver, CO, with firefighters and volunteers from Fire Corps and CERT programs.



In addition, CPD hosted a kick-off call with Citizen Corps Councils from across the nation, promoted Safety & Security Week (Aug 24-30<sup>th</sup>), certified Presidential Volunteer Service Awards, provided regular information updates and ideas for Councils to get involved, and worked closely with the Corporation for National and Community Service to create a Community Preparedness Toolkit and post almost 9,500 Citizen Corps Council and Partner Program volunteer opportunities on the new national service registry website, [Serve.gov](http://Serve.gov).

### Citizen Corps Affiliates



The 27 Citizen Corps Affiliates, consisting of both national non-profits and Federal agencies, offer additional resources for public education, outreach, and training to Citizen Corps Councils. Affiliates also represent volunteers interested in helping to make their community safer; and/or offer volunteer service opportunities to support first responders, disaster relief activities, and community safety efforts. The Affiliates have had

an enormous national impact, making invaluable contributions to the communities that they serve all across the country.

During 2009, CPD focused on strengthening Affiliate communication and outreach in order to increase support and promotion for events, initiatives, and opportunities throughout the larger Citizen Corps network. In addition to quarterly Affiliate Conference Calls, CPD meets separately with each Affiliate to identify areas of collaboration and participation at the National, State and local levels. One such area was the Digital Television Transition that occurred in June 2009. Throughout the first six months of 2009, CPD worked closely with Citizen Corps partners and affiliates to assist with the Digital Television Transition for those who would be most vulnerable in emergency situations (e.g., people in rural or tribal areas, older adults, people with disabilities, people who speak English as a second language and low-income individuals). Citizen Corps Councils and partners across the nation provided support to at-risk population groups via grassroots, hands-on assistance by installing converter boxes,

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handing out flyers on the DTV transition, manning local information hotlines, and assisting citizens with receiving their DTV coupons.

Additionally, CPD continues to evaluate potential partnerships with other non-profit organizations and Federal agencies which could provide additional resources in areas of community preparedness. This year, Citizen Corps signed new Statements of Affiliation with the United States Power Squadrons and the Girl Scouts of the USA.

- United States Power Squadrons: On February 29, 2009, FEMA and the U.S. Power Squadrons announced a new affiliation in support of Citizen Corps. The alliance between Citizen Corps and U.S. Power Squadrons makes for a natural homeland security team as the U.S. Power Squadrons are playing an increasingly critical role in maritime safety and security via the *America's Waterway Watch* and *Waterway Awareness Programs*. The U.S. Power Squadrons, organized in 1914, is America's largest non-profit boating organization dedicated to making boating safer and more enjoyable through public education in seamanship, navigation and related marine safety topics. They have 45,000 members organized into 450 squadrons nationwide and U.S. territories.



- Girls Scouts of the USA: On September 8, 2009, DHS Secretary Janet Napolitano and Girl Scouts of the USA CEO Kathy Cloninger announced a newly-formed affiliation between FEMA and the Girl Scouts of the USA to support Citizen Corps. FEMA and the Girl Scouts of the USA view community safety and the principle of service to our country as top priorities for their respective organizations and for the American people. Girl Scouts of the USA is the world's preeminent organization dedicated solely to all girls where, in an accepting and nurturing environment, girls build character and skills for success in the real world. In partnership with committed adult volunteers, girls develop qualities that will serve them all their lives, like leadership, strong values, social conscience, and conviction about their own potential and self-worth.



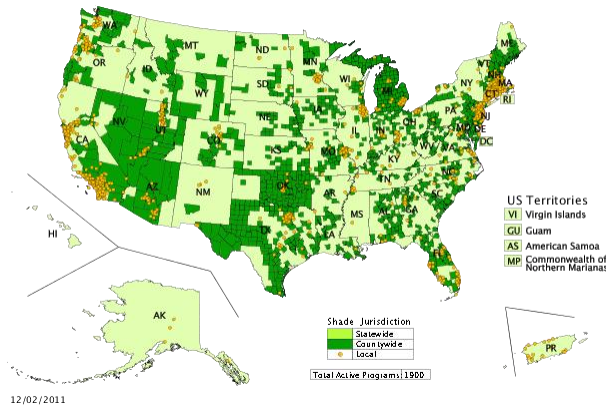
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## Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Program

When any emergency occurs—a single incident or a widespread disaster—citizens are almost always the first on-scene to assist those who need help. Ordinary people help their neighbors, co-workers, sometimes complete strangers until professional responders can arrive. The CERT Program builds on their willingness to help and engages people from all walks of life who want to have better skills to help others in emergency situations. The program provides education on disaster preparedness and training in basic disaster response skills, such as using fire extinguishers, light search and rescue, and disaster medical operations. Using their training, CERT members can assist others in their neighborhood or workplace following an event and can take a more active role in preparing their community. The National CERT Program is administered by CPD, and local CERT Programs are sponsored by fire departments, or law enforcement or emergency management agencies.



Community Emergency Response Teams



During FY 2009, the CERT Program saw an increase of 10% to a total of 3,345 community locations by the end of the year including all 56 States and territories. In many of these communities, CERTs were active in supporting emergency response to floods, fires, power outages, and other local emergencies. Through partnerships with professional responders, other community-based organizations, and state emergency management agencies, CERT Programs across the country continued to make their hometowns safer and better prepared. Here are some examples:

### **North Dakota CERTs Fight the Floods**

North Dakota is used to harsh winters. However, spring 2009 found the State suffering more than usual as that winter's record snowfall melted, causing widespread flooding. As the waters rose, CERTs across the State stepped up to assist their communities. "The program has been a great tool for the State of North Dakota," said Sarah Werner, the State CERT Program Manager. "Having trained and ready volunteers when disaster strikes is invaluable."

Bismarck was one of the first communities affected by the flooding. Centrally located CERTs from Bismarck, Burleigh County, and United Tribes Technical College were activated to assist with sandbagging along



*CERT members build a sandbag barrier to help prevent flooding in North Dakota. (Photo courtesy of Sarah Werner)*



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the Missouri River. An estimated 40 CERT volunteers worked more than 300 hours to fill bags and supervise “sandbag central,” located in the Bismarck Civic Center. Werner worked at the Bismarck sandbag site managing the volunteers and the registration process. “Throughout the State tens of thousands of volunteers worked countless hours, including hundreds of CERT volunteers,” she said.

CERT members assisted in coordinating the overall operations. Speaking to KXMB-TV, CERT Volunteer Coordinator Duane Pool expected the operation to use between 800,000 and 1 million sandbags. He acknowledged the outpouring of volunteers saying, “I am amazed at the operation working as efficiently as it is with as many volunteers as we have.” In three days “sandbag central” registered more than 4,000 volunteers.

As the waters continued to rise, CERTs were activated to help in Fargo, the State’s largest city. Cass County, North Dakota and Clay County, Minnesota CERT volunteers helped sandbag, check in volunteers, and answer calls at the city’s call center. A group of CERT members were also put in charge of one of the city’s volunteer check-in sites. Elsewhere in the State, CERT volunteers in rural Dickey County identified and documented downed power lines, managed sandbagging operations, staffed an emergency shelter, documented emergency response operations, and identified needs.



*CERT members at “sandbag central” in the Bismarck, ND Civic Center. (Photo courtesy of Sarah Werner)*

“The CERT response was great,” said Werner. “Our volunteers continue to prove that they will be there when the State needs them. This was not North Dakota CERT’s first disaster deployment and it will not be its last. Each time they are deployed, CERT volunteers show the value of their training.”

### Hidden Village, Utah CERT Responds to Canyon Road Landslide

Shortly before noon on July 11, 2009, a landslide associated with an irrigation canal breach moved rapidly down a steep hillside on Canyon Road in Logan, Utah. Three people were killed when their home was completely demolished; 16 other homes were damaged. The Hidden Village Neighborhood CERT was activated to respond to the crisis. A wife of a CERT member spotted the landslide and within 23 minutes six CERT members had arrived on the scene and immediately set up a command post and radio communications center. Using ICS, the CERT organized teams and shifts and put in more than 232 hours during the five-day incident. “Sixteen of our Hidden Village CERT [members] engaged and responded,” said Sue Shaw, Hidden Village Emergency Preparedness Leader.

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Shaw served as a recorder on the first day of the incident, working with Incident Commander John Ellsworth. They began by orienting volunteers – 300 in the first shift – and assigning them to cleanup sites. Noting their efforts, EMS Coordinator and Assistant Fire Chief Will Lusk then tasked the CERT to oversee the organization and supervision of hundreds of additional volunteers – 784 by the second day of the incident. The volunteers were responsible for cleanup on the affected streets in preparation for city cleaning crews to begin their work.



*CERT members respond to a landslide in Hidden Village, Utah, where they coordinated volunteer efforts and supported professional responders. (Photo courtesy of John Ellsworth)*

CECERT personnel were asked to cover four-hour shifts over the next 24 hours to ensure emergency personnel had the necessary supplies. Their success in this area led the city to continue CERT deployment on Monday, July 13, placing them in charge of water and food distribution for emergency personnel. CERTs also continued to organize and direct volunteers, and provide security for the command center and a church being used as a shelter. “We held the fort so to speak in the first two days of the disaster,” said Shaw. Their experience training together as a neighborhood, participating in exercises, their familiarity with the command center, and the variety of tasks they had to fulfill, “kept the CERT [members] alert and active during their four-hour shifts,” said Shaw.

Hidden Village CERT remained on the scene and in action from the beginning of the incident until final wrap-up occurred five days later. Logan City officials are now convinced that CERT members can fill an important and vital role in disaster response and management. Logan County Fire Department Assistant Chief Lusk emphasized that CERT was crucial to the recovery effort. “They’re a group of people that deserve a lot of credit,” he said. “They have the heart and soul of a champion.”

### **Independence, Mo., CERT Helps Residents Get Through the Night**

When Independence, Mo., Emergency Preparedness Manager Mark Widner activated the City’s CERT on February 5, 2009, for a scheduled power outage that was expected to last until the early hours of the morning, the response from CERT members was overwhelming. “It was the neatest thing that I’ve ever been involved with,” Widner said. “I couldn’t have been more proud of our CERT volunteers.”

The circumstances that led to the successful response began earlier in the day, when Widner received a call from a disabled resident in a 10-story apartment complex who was concerned about a scheduled power outage in the building that night. Widner, well aware that people tend to light candles when electricity isn’t available and that the apartment complex didn’t have a sprinkler system, saw the potential for a serious problem. He consulted with power company officials who told him that they were going to be performing the work overnight and the power would be shut off at 10 p.m. and restored at 4 a.m.

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Not wanting to expend the City's professional public safety resources, Widner decided to activate the Independence CERT, which boasts over 800 volunteers. "We needed people to do fire watch," Widner said. "We needed people in the hallways and people in the stairwells. There were a lot of residents in the building with known medical problems, and there was no generator backup power, so we needed people there."

More than enough CERT members volunteered to help. Twenty-five volunteers met Widner at the apartment complex around 9:30 p.m. Chiefs from the Independence fire and police departments arrived to survey the situation.

"The CERT members organized themselves when they got there," Widner said. "They set up their own incident command system; they coordinated with the fire department and police department. After a while, the fire chief said, 'These guys are running this thing as well as we could.'"

Two CERT members were assigned to each floor, while five other members served as runners. The volunteers, who donned reflective vests and carried flashlights, assisted residents coming into the building and going up and down stairs. They occupied hallways and stairways and kept alert for any signs of a fire, using radios to communicate with CERT members stationed at the command post outside of the building.

"It was really a great activation," Widner said. "It showed that these guys really can step in. I've never been prouder of a group of people in my life."

### Parma, OH CERT Assist Local Fire Crews



*A CERT member digs out a fire hydrant after a snow storm in Parma, OH.*

Following a major snowstorm in February 2009, Parma, OH Fire Chief John French sent a city-wide message urging residents to clear snow off fire hydrants on their blocks. Parma CERT Coordinator Brian Riegel sent a message to his team requesting volunteers to clear snow off fire hydrants that remained covered the following day.

This activation marked the second time in the last few years that Parma CERT had been mobilized to clear snow off of the hydrants. Working in teams, 24 CERT volunteers cleared more than 200 hydrants in the city of 85,000. Riegel said the activation provided a perfect opportunity for his team to practice accountability, safety, and organization in a non-threatening situation. By all accounts, the response was a success. "We talked to several firefighters afterward, and they were all very appreciative," Riegel said. "It was something that needed to be done and should have been done."

To help Team members maintain and enhance their CERT skills, in the upcoming year the National CERT Program will release an updated CERT Basic Training Course and a

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new Train-the-Trainer Course, along with six modules of advanced training and exercises.

### **NET Guard Pilot Program**

Authorized by the Homeland Security Act of 2002, the National Technology Guard (NET Guard) program was conceived as teams of volunteers with expertise in information technology (IT) and communications will assist localities and States in preparing for, responding to, and recovering from incidents that cause significant damage or destruction to IT and communications infrastructure. CPD has been the lead in the development and management of the NET Guard program since April 2008.



Currently, CPD is overseeing the local implementation of this concept via four pilot programs: the City of Austin, TX (in the Austin, TX Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI)); the City of Chesapeake, VA (in the Norfolk, VA UASI); Cottonwood Heights City, UT (in the Salt Lake, UT UASI); and Hamilton County, IN (in the Indianapolis, IN UASI). Each pilot has received \$80,000 through Cooperative Agreement funding and is currently testing the program concept through local development of NET Guard teams with a range of functions, delivery models, and public-private partnerships. Input from the pilot programs will be used to assist with developing guidance and tools to support potential local implementation of NET Guard as part of the Citizen Corps network.

### **Summary**

To achieve the ultimate goal of creating a deeply imbedded culture of preparedness throughout America, the Community Preparedness Division works closely with other offices across NPD, across FEMA, across DHS, and with numerous external partners. But while the Community Preparedness Division has the responsibility to provide policy support and direction, to ensure funding is accessible, and to provide technical expertise and assistance, the true strength of community preparedness lies in the local implementation of the Citizen Corps model. Prepared communities form the backbone of a nation ready to withstand enormous challenges. We can take action now to improve the safety of our communities, to help protect ourselves and our families, to help reduce the impact of any emergency and deal with the chaos if an incident does occur. Through public education and outreach, training and exercises, and volunteer service, Citizen Corps provides the means for all American's to participate in making our communities safer, stronger and better prepared to respond to threats of terrorism, crime, public health issues and disasters of all kinds.