



# FEMA

# Citizen Corps April 2007 Newsletter



## BY THE NUMBERS

Citizen Corps Councils:	2,177
CERT	2,631
Fire Corps	603
MRC	654
NWP	14,791
VIPS	1,632
Affiliates	25

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## View from HQ

April 1 marked a new phase for the Citizen Corps Program. As part of the realignment of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), Citizen Corps joined FEMA as part of the National Preparedness Directorate.

This move places Citizen Corps within an organization whose focus is closely aligned with Citizen Corps' mission of **bringing community and government leaders together to involve community members in all-hazards emergency preparedness, planning, mitigation, response, and recovery.** As we were preparing this month's newsletter, the tragic shooting at Virginia Tech hit the news. Our staff extends our deepest sympathies to the families and friends of the students and teachers who were killed. Inside this newsletter, we have included some examples of what states and Councils around the nation have been doing to enhance the safety of our children in schools and on campuses.

## 2007 National Conference on Community Preparedness

FEMA Administrator R. David Paulison will give a keynote address to attendees at the upcoming *2007 National Conference on Community Preparedness: Partnerships and Collaboration through Citizen Corps.* The conference addresses a comprehensive scope of issues related to preparing America's communities for all types of emergencies and increasing resilience through collaborative planning, citizen training, and multi-sector participation. Conference panel discussions will cover topics ranging from best practices in community preparedness, updated information on national policies, partnering with the private sector to enhance preparedness and response, reaching out to special needs populations—such as those with mobility, language, or age-related concerns—funding, volunteer liability issues, new research on citizen preparedness, and other areas related to the many aspects of all-hazard preparedness, prevention, response, mitigation, and recovery. Panel speakers will include emergency managers, non-governmental organizations, state/local/tribal/territorial representatives, federal representatives, private sector representatives, and others. Lynne Kidder, Sr. Vice President, Business Force, Business Executives for National Security (BENS) is another confirmed speaker. The conference will be held June 10 - 13 in Alexandria, VA. It is co-hosted by the National Emergency Management Association and the International Association of Emergency Managers, and is funded in part through a cooperative agreement with DHS. For more information and to register, visit the conference registration site: [www.iaem.com/NCCC2007.htm](http://www.iaem.com/NCCC2007.htm).

## Hurricane Preparedness Week is May 20-26, 2007

Visit the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) Hurricane Preparedness Week website to learn about hurricane hazards and what steps to take in to prepare your home and community. The website also offers a free, downloadable Hurricane Preparedness Week poster.

[www.nhc.noaa.gov/HAW2/english/intro.shtml](http://www.nhc.noaa.gov/HAW2/english/intro.shtml)

## Hurricane Preparedness Tool

With the 2007 Hurricane Season looming, the Capital Area Chapter of the American Red Cross in Tallahassee, FL, has rolled out its new hurricane preparedness tool, which is available online at

<http://redcross.tallytown.com/hw.html> The American Red Cross is a National Citizen Corps Affiliate.

## FEMA Administrator Stresses Reforms and Preparedness for 2007 Hurricane Season

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Administrator R. David Paulison delivered the keynote address at the National Hurricane Conference in New Orleans this month.

"Today FEMA is better aligned and focused on helping America to prepare before an event strikes; has stronger operational systems and plans in place to improve response and coordination; is working to find new ways to help communities recover and rebuild after an event strikes; is committed to working hand-in-hand with our partners at every level of government as well as those in the nonprofit and private sectors; and is dedicated to fostering a culture of personal preparedness amongst all Americans," said Paulison. He highlighted significant changes to FEMA that included communications, logistics, continuity of operations and addressing waste, fraud and abuse. Paulison also stressed the new, experienced leadership now at FEMA, and noted that, for the first time in recent memory, all 10 regional administrator positions have been filled. Plus, FEMA is now up to 90 percent of its authorized workforce strength. In addition, FEMA is certifying individuals from federal, state, local and tribal organizations to provide essential functions and services during times of crisis.

"We have led training efforts including 'Forward Challenge 06,' the largest full-scale interagency COOP (Continuity of Operation Planning) exercise in history, and dozens of smaller, more focused exercises," said Paulison. He stressed that with more resources in place and better communications established, FEMA is better aligned and focused on helping America to prepare before an event strikes.

"We are not done yet. There is still much work to do. But if our strides over the past year are any example, we are on the right track to fulfilling our vision of being the nations' preeminent emergency management agency," concluded Paulison.

## State Liability Legislation

Ohio enacted Revised Code 121.404, providing liability protection to registered Ohio Citizen Corps volunteers (including Ohio Medical Reserve Corps) during local, state or federally declared emergencies, disasters, drills and trainings. The statute also exempts a registered volunteer's personal information on the Ohio Citizen Corps Database from public disclosure.

At the national level, the Citizen Corps Program has a cooperative agreement with the Public Entity Risk Institute (PERI) to research existing state liability legislation. Current research is posted to the Citizen Corps website ([www.citizencorps.gov/councils/liability.shtml](http://www.citizencorps.gov/councils/liability.shtml)), and those who are interested in learning more can hear updates at the *2007 National Conference on Community Preparedness* in June on initiatives to promote liability protection for volunteers. For conference information, including registration, visit [www.iaem.com/nccc2007.htm](http://www.iaem.com/nccc2007.htm).

## Center for Biosecurity Major Findings

1. Members of the public are first responders and outbreak managers, too.
2. Stockpiling in case of an emergency is both too much and too little to ask of Americans.
3. “Citizen” preparedness must look outside the individual home to the civic infrastructure.
4. The civic infrastructure has much to offer before, during, and after an event.
5. Adept crisis managers engage community partners prior to an event.
6. Partnerships provide leaders the wisdom and courage to weigh tradeoffs and confront difficult scenarios.
7. Certain ingredients are necessary for genuine community engagement.
8. The community needs strong health and safety institutions with which to partner.

[www.upmc-biosecurity.org/](http://www.upmc-biosecurity.org/)

## The Center for Bio Security at the University of Pittsburg Medical Center Releases Findings on Emergency Preparedness

The Center for Biosecurity at the University of Pittsburg Medical Center has released findings from its Working Group on Community Engagement in Health Emergency Planning. The report features Citizen Corps as an exemplary tool for civic engagement in health emergency preparedness (p. 12) and remarks on the program’s achievements despite limited and uncertain funding (p. 15).

The Working Group advises mayors, governors, and health and safety officers that strong partnerships with local civic networks can enhance authorities’ ability to govern in a crisis, improve application of communally held resources, and reduce social and economic costs associated with epidemics and disasters. Based on this core finding, the Biosecurity Center recommends that federal authorities make a sustained national investment in local health emergency preparedness systems that collaborate with civic groups and incorporate citizen input.

More information is available online at [www.upmc-biosecurity.org/website/focus/community\\_engage/2007\\_working\\_group/index.html](http://www.upmc-biosecurity.org/website/focus/community_engage/2007_working_group/index.html)—including advice on the key principles and ingredients for successful community engagement.

*Contributed by Monica Schoch-Spana, PhD, UPMC Center for Biosecurity*  
[www.upmc-biosecurity.org](http://www.upmc-biosecurity.org)

## American Red Cross Appoints New CEO

WASHINGTON, DC, April 18, 2007 – The American Red Cross Board of Governors has unanimously approved Mark W. Everson, currently serving as Commissioner of Internal Revenue, to become the next president and CEO of the Red Cross, effective May 29, 2007. Mark Everson brings to the Red Cross an accomplished management record in both the public and private sectors. Everson has served as the 46<sup>th</sup> Commissioner of the Internal Revenue Service since May 5, 2003, and previously served as Group Vice President – Finance for SC International, a \$2 billion privately-owned food services company with leading market positions in airline catering and home meal solutions.

The American Red Cross, a national Citizen Corps Program Affiliate, helps people prevent, prepare for and respond to emergencies. Last year, almost a million volunteers and 35,000 employees helped victims of almost 73,000 disasters; taught lifesaving skills to millions and helped U.S. service members on active duty stay connected with their families.

## Outreach themes in the coming months ...

### MAY

- National Older Americans Month
- May 7-13, 2007: National Nurses Week
- May 12, 2007: National Animal Disaster Preparedness Day
- May 12-17, 2007: National Police Week
- May 20-26, 2007: National EMS Week
- May 20-26, 2007: National Public Works Week

### JUNE

- National Safety Month – National Safety Council
- Home Safety Month – Home Safety Council
- June 1, 2007: Hurricane Season Begins
- June 11-17, 2007: National Men's Health Week
- June 14, 2007: Flag Day
- June 23-24, 2007: ARRL Field Day

### JULY

- July 4, 2007: Independence Day
- July 26, 2007: Anniversary of the Signing of the Americans with Disabilities Act
- July 28, 2007: Parents' Day

Complete listing available at:  
[/www.citizencorps.gov/news/themes.shtm](http://www.citizencorps.gov/news/themes.shtm)

## GOOD PRACTICES

### Emergency Manager Wins Award for Preparing Deaf Residents for Disasters

Jim Davis, emergency coordinator for Pittsylvania County, VA, earned the Alan Clive Spirit and Service Award at the 2007 National Hurricane Conference this month in New Orleans. Davis' work includes emergency preparedness for the deaf communities in Pittsylvania County and the city of Danville. Davis formed a partnership between the two localities and the Danville Community College to provide weather alert radios with visual alarms and training to local deaf residents. The partnership also provided Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training to the deaf community with sign language interpreters. Instead of holding separate CERT training for deaf residents, Davis taught the basic disaster response class to both hearing and deaf residents, allowing them to work together during the final exercise as they would in a real world event. Davis secured funding for the radios and interpreters from the Danville Lions Club, and a Virginia Corps grant helped fund the interpreters.

The award honors Dr. Alan Clive, a Civil Rights Program manager for the Federal Emergency Management Agency. As a staff member of the Office of Equal Rights for more than 20 years, Clive has been involved in almost every aspect of FEMA's disability program. His primary interest has focused on the needs of disabled and elderly people in preparing for, responding to and recovering from disaster. The Conference Committee on Health Care and Special Needs gives the annual award to individuals who demonstrate outstanding leadership toward ensuring that emergency management is inclusive of all people. This is the second year the award has been given.

### Rural CERT

In rural St. Petersburg Borough/Richland Township in Clarion County, PA, the local CERT conducted a survey of area residents to gather information that would help response efforts during an emergency. The survey inquired about the number of people in each residence, their ages, disabilities, and any specialized training they might have. In addition to encouraging its members to take advantage of the training offered by the local fire department each month, addressing equipment, safety, and rescue techniques, the St. Petersburg Borough/Richland CERT is promoting CPR certification for its members, as well as advanced Search and Rescue training, including water rescue. Several of the team's members have joined the county's Animal Response Team, and the CERT has also been asked to help staff the Point of Distribution sites required under the Strategic National Stockpile. Neighboring municipalities in Venango, Armstrong and Butler counties have also formed an alliance with the St. Petersburg/Richland CERT for assistance in times of disaster.

## National Volunteer Week 2007 April 15-21

According to a recent study by the Corporation for National and Community Service, Illinois leads the country in volunteerism.

Over 30 percent of Illinois residents—or 2.75 million people—volunteered in 2006, contributing 311.1 million hours of service.

*Source: Volunteering in America*

Full report available here:  
[www.nationalservice.gov/about/volunteering/index.asp](http://www.nationalservice.gov/about/volunteering/index.asp)

## Nonprofit Organizations At High Risk Are Eligible To Receive Federal Funding

The Department of Homeland Security recently announced that nonprofit organizations at high risk of international terrorist attacks are eligible to apply for funds as part of the Fiscal Year (FY) 2007 Urban Areas Security Initiative (UASI) Nonprofit Security Grant Program. This program will make \$24,007,500 available to eligible 501(c)(3) organizations that are located within the designated FY 2007 UASI cities throughout the country.

Nonprofit organizations must submit applications through their State Administrative Agency (SAA) to be considered eligible for an award of up to \$100,000. Nonprofit organizations must agree to match 25 percent of federal grant funds in cash or through equivalent, related training. Applications will be reviewed and prioritized by the SAA in coordination with the Urban Area Working Group (UAWG) and the local Citizen Corps Council. Urban Area Citizen Corps Councils serving the designated UASI cities are encouraged to reach out to their UAWG to coordinate their participation in this review. For more information on the FY 2007 UASI Nonprofit Security Grant Program, visit [www.dhs.gov](http://www.dhs.gov).

## Canine Unit part of Local Citizen Corps

Argus, a canine search and rescue unit based in Bloomington, IN, was one of the first Monroe County Citizen Corps affiliates. Argus members train to standards established by the NASAR (National Association for Search and Rescue), and the group has a very close working relationship with the Monroe County Search and Rescue Team that is also based in Bloomington. Two working dogs are on-call 24 hours a day. The team consists of dedicated volunteers who train the canine members twice a week in various aspects of search and rescue. More information is available at: [www.argusk9.org](http://www.argusk9.org).



*Monroe County (IL) Citizen Corps has partnered with the Argus canine search and rescue unit pictured above.*

## Sheltering Pets in Disasters

The Tallahassee, FL, Capital Area Chapter of the American Red Cross and the Big Bend Disaster Animal Response Team have recently completed a Pet Friendly Shelter Manual which outlines how an American Red Cross Shelter and a Pet Friendly Shelter will be operated using the same school campus. In addition the two organizations have just brought on-line a new Pet Friendly Shelter Trailer which contains the supplies needed to support the community's Pet Friendly Shelter. For a copy of the manual and other information, including an inventory of the trailer, please visit the following web site: <http://redcross.tallytown.com/bbdart.html>

## Teen CERT Highlight

Algoma (Wisconsin) high school and middle school students took part in a mock disaster on Friday March 9, completing 21 hours of the local version of Teen CERT—school emergency response training (SERT). The incident was based on scenario in which an explosion in the high school's chemistry lab caused a power outage and injured some theater students in an adjacent room. The mock disaster tested the students' training in search and rescue, first aid, cardio-pulmonary response, emergency medical operations and emergency preparedness. Using what they learned in the class, students evaluated the situation, made their way to the accident scene, identified who was injured and the extent of injuries, escorted students who could walk and carried others out into the hallway where first aid was administered.

Article here:

<http://www.greenbaypressgazette.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=2007703100563>

## School and Campus Safety Highlights Around the Nation

The examples below provide a snapshot of activities that have been undertaken over the past few years to increase safety in schools and on campuses around the nation:

**Alaska:** Since 2004, more than 200 students in the Colony High School (Palmer, Alaska) Junior ROTC program have completed CERT training. During the 2005-2006 school year, kindergartners through sixth graders from around the state participated in the state Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management Emergency Preparedness Poster Contest. Elementary school children were first challenged to learn about the ways to prepare for emergencies in their homes and communities using information provided to schools by Alaska's Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management. Then the students drew a picture depicting a way to prepare for, or respond to, an emergency. The contest was judged by Alaska's First Lady Nancy Murkowski and the state's Homeland Security and Emergency Management Director David E. Lieberbach. Winning entries received U.S. Savings Bond prizes.

**Colorado:** Colorado has active Teen CERT programs around the state, including the Denver Metro Area. The CERT program for Boulder County also includes the University of Colorado. Pueblo West High School (PWHS) located in the southeast part of the state has had an active Teen SERT/CERT program for many years now. They conducted seven exercises that covered two days this past winter. In the advanced course, students planned the exercise for the Teen SERT/CERT classes and over 260 Teen SERT/CERT kids participated along with the drama students as victims. The victims were fully moulaged and very realistic. All aspects of the traditional CERT hands-on activities were displayed and additional advanced response techniques that are part of the PWHS Teen SERT/CERT program.

**Oklahoma:** Oklahoma Office of Homeland Security is partnering with the state Department of Education, in a new groundbreaking grant program offered to Oklahoma public elementary schools in conjunction with National Preparedness Month. Schools that choose to participate in the grant program will conduct an assessment of their facility, submit an enhancement plan and incorporate the materials provided by Ready Kids ([www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov)) into their classrooms beginning this month. Five elementary schools will be selected to receive \$10,000 to purchase security equipment for their facility.

**Wisconsin:** Wisconsin Homeland Security has developed a comprehensive program to address school safety. The state has been sponsoring a series of workshops or conferences in coordination with the school system on school safety and preparedness. It is an awareness initiative designed specifically for schools. They have also sponsored READY Camp, a week-long training for students on emergency preparedness.

## May is Older Americans Month

Americans 65 and over make up a large portion of the community. Retirees can offer a valuable source of knowledge and talent for your community preparedness and volunteer efforts. Older individuals also have special needs to consider in emergency plans—such as mobility, medications, and caregivers.

- In 2005, **38.5 million** Americans were over 65, or **12 percent** of the U.S. population
- By 2050, the U.S. Census estimates that the number of older Americans will rise to **87.6 million** people, or **21 percent** of the population.

Source: U.S. Census

## AROUND THE COUNTRY

### McReady Oklahoma 2007 Launched

Oklahoma Governor Brad Henry has proclaimed April as “McReady Oklahoma Family Preparedness Month.” Throughout the month the statewide severe weather preparedness campaign once again features displays in more than 160 McDonald’s restaurants. The McReady campaign is a public-private partnership designed to prepare families for emergencies, increase awareness of severe weather threats, and help build prepared communities. Kick-off events were held April 2 in Tulsa at Remington Elementary and in Midwest City at Traub Elementary and the Reed Center.

In addition to displays packed with brochures and booklets, this year’s campaign includes a weather safety DVD that will be delivered to Oklahoma schools. The DVD features Oklahoma’s First Lady Kim Henry, KOCO Channel 5’s Head Meteorologist Rick Mitchell, and Oklahoma Gas & Electric’s Larry the Lineman. McReady partners include the Oklahoma Emergency Management Association, Oklahoma Department of Emergency Management, the American Red Cross, R.D. Flanagan & Associates, KOCO Channel 5 in Oklahoma City, KOTV Channel 6 in Tulsa, MOROCH, National Weather Service, OG&E Electric Services, Oklahoma Citizen Corps, Oklahoma Office of Homeland Security, Oklahoma Floodplain Managers Association, *The Oklahoman*, The Salvation Army and Tulsa Mayor’s Citizen Corps/Tulsa Partners, Inc.(source: [http://www.ok.gov/OEM/News/2007\\_News/20070404\\_-\\_McReady.html](http://www.ok.gov/OEM/News/2007_News/20070404_-_McReady.html))

### Operation Reach Out

In celebration of National Public Health Week, the Sacramento County’s Public Health Preparedness and Response Program, in cooperation with the Sacramento Regional Office of Homeland Security, joined with the Sacramento Region Citizen Corps Council CERT volunteers to host “Operation Reach Out,” an exercise specifically geared toward assisting those who have language and special needs. The partners called on a variety of volunteer organizations, such as CERT, VISTAs, Volunteers in Police Service (VIPS) from both Sacramento Police Department and Sacramento Sheriffs Department, MRC, and other volunteers. These groups organized, coordinated and distributed emergency home preparedness guides and influenza information to 29 sites throughout Sacramento County, educating residents on how to prepare for an emergency or disaster. Materials were produced in eight different languages as well as Braille, large font, and in audio compact disc formats. The sites and materials were selected according to the demographics and language needs of the neighborhoods. For more information, contact Hanna Aalborg at HAALBORG@pd.cityofsacramento.org

## National Volunteer Fire Council Testifies Before House Appropriations Subcommittee on Homeland Security

Cherryville Fire Chief Jeff Cash, the National Volunteer Fire Council's (NVFC) North Carolina state Director and a member of the NVFC Executive Committee, testified on March 9 before the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Homeland Security at a hearing entitled, "Preparing for Disasters, Natural or Otherwise." Cash's testimony included strong support for Citizen Corps funding.

The NVFC helps to administer Fire Corps, which enables fire and emergency services departments to use community volunteers in non-emergency roles such as public education and administrative tasks.

Cash also testified about full funding of the Assistance to Firefighters Grant program, the U.S. Fire Administration, credentialing, and the SAFER Grant program. A full copy of his testimony can be found at <http://www.nvfc.org/pdf/2007-cash-testimony.pdf>.

## PROGRAM PARTNER HIGHLIGHTS

Volunteers from the **Medical Reserve Corps (MRC)** of North Idaho participated in the first Spring into Safety Carnival hosted by a local school district. Duties included "Germ City" participation to demonstrate and teach proper hand washing. They also participated in speaking to parents about the MRC and playing games and handing out prizes to the children. Members of the Kane County (IL) MRC "Rescue Rider" program were called to assist with the delivery of medication to two health departments that treated over 3,000 people for food poisoning.

USAonWatch will hold **Neighborhood Watch** Toolkit trainings in several locations around the country, including:

- Sacramento, California—May 16-17 (Sponsored by California Citizen Corps)
- Dayton, OH—June 7-8
- Oklahoma City, OK—August 24-25

For more information on Neighborhood Watch Toolkit trainings, contact Robbie Woodson at [RWOODSON@sheriffs.org](mailto:RWOODSON@sheriffs.org)

When **Fire Corps** was launched in December 2004, they had 11 registered fire programs and about 600 volunteers throughout the country. Today, just over two years later, there are 600 registered Fire Corps programs and 9,000 Fire Corps-trained volunteers. In the summer of 2006, 30 percent of Fire Corps programs around the country responded to a Fire Corps Member Survey. The survey reported that over 54 percent of respondents' fire departments use citizens to conduct fire prevention and life safety education and over 52 percent of respondents reported increased support from the community, local and state officials. Fire Corps programs account for 66 percent use of their volunteers for special projects such as hurricane preparedness, relief, and planning. Financial support continues to be a primary barrier in implementing Fire Corps around the country, as reported by 45 percent of the respondents.

The Fallon, NV, Police Department's **Volunteers in Police Service (VIPS)** program is critical to maintaining compliance issues that otherwise require the attention of a sworn officer. From writing citations for parking violations to educating drivers with handicap placards on where to park to avoid citations, these volunteers are the extra eyes and ears the city needs. In Eugene, OR, the Seniors on Patrol program currently has 14 volunteers who donate about 500 hours of their time each month.



## Questions or Comments about the Newsletter?

Contact the Citizen Corps national office at [citizen-corps@dhs.gov](mailto:citizen-corps@dhs.gov).

If you are submitting an article for consideration, please limit it to 50 to 150 words. All photos are assumed to be approved for publication. Please include captions for photos, including who is in the picture, what they are doing, and where the photo was taken.

## Updated Authorized Equipment List (AEL)

The Authorized Equipment List (AEL), produced and maintained by FEMA, lists and categorizes the equipment allowable for purchase under several DHS grants including the Citizen Corps Program as part of the Homeland Security Grant Program. Previously, the AEL had been updated on an annual basis; however, beginning with the most recent version, the AEL will be updated on an as-needed basis. The latest version of the AEL was released on March 3, 2007, and applies to Fiscal Year 2005 and all later years. AEL users will be able to view a log of updates when they access the site. Over 40 equipment items are currently listed as allowable under the Citizen Corps Program.

Each equipment item listed in the AEL has a corresponding description that explains the allowable item in detail. Items under Citizen Corps include but are not limited to the following: hard hats, vests, basic medical supplies, and boundary marking tape. Equipment not specifically identified may be allowable under Category 21.9, "Equipment, Citizen Corps." State Citizen Corps Program Managers are encouraged to work with their State Administrative Agency to determine whether equipment not specifically identified in the AEL would be allowable under the Citizen Corps Program.

To locate allowable Citizen Corps Program equipment, visit [www.rkb.mipt.org](http://www.rkb.mipt.org). Click on the "Filtered List" button at the top of the page and search by checking the Citizen Corps Program box. Supplemental information on the AEL as it relates to the Citizen Corps Program will be available shortly.

## Question of the Month

### Q. Is the CERT course offered online?

A. **There is an independent online course called "Introduction to Community Emergency Response Team" (IS-317).** This independent study course serves as an Introduction to CERT, and it can also be used as a refresher for current team members. This **online course does not replace the classroom training.** To become a member of your local CERT, you will need to take the classroom-based, instructor-led CERT training conducted by the agency that sponsors your local CERT Program. This is typically a local fire department, law enforcement or emergency management agency. If you are interested in the online Introduction to CERT course, visit: <http://www.citizencorps.gov/cert/IS317/>. When you complete the course, there will be a test online and you must score 75 percent or more to receive your certificate of completion. The certificate can be printed from your computer.

Questions related to the CERT program can be emailed to [CERT@dhs.gov](mailto:CERT@dhs.gov)