



National NEWSLETTER

Vol. 2 – Issue 3

San Diego County CERT Drills During AMGEN Tour of California Bike Race



More than 70 cyclists participated in the AMGEN Tour of California bicycle race in February 2009. CERT members practiced communication and the Incident Command System at the event.

With the backdrop of beautiful Palomar Mountain and the excitement of the AMGEN Tour of California bike race, San Diego County CERT conducted an exercise that focused on developing Incident Command System (ICS) skills, as well as radio communication skills.

The February 2009 event, featuring over 70 professional cyclists (including Lance Armstrong) and a 4,000-foot ascent to the summit of Palomar Mountain, created an ideal opportunity for testing CERT organization. "We wanted to have a formalized structure [to test] our Incident Command System and communications," said Bill

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Greetings from the National CERT Program

Since the first issue of the CERT National Newsletter was published in September 2008, the National CERT Program Office has happily received many stories from local programs on training, activations, and other CERT activities. CERT drills and exercises are popular topics that show up regularly among the stories you send. It seemed like a good idea to devote an issue of the National Newsletter to the topic, and we're pleased to provide a series of stories in this edition about exercises conducted by CERT programs across the country.

We wish we could feature every article submitted about drills and exercises. The *(Continued on page 3)*

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NATIONAL PREPAREDNESS DIRECTORATE



San Diego County CERT Drills During AMGEN Tour of California Bike Race

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Leininger, CERT coordinator. “People need to learn to work and play well together. We wanted our members to practice using ICS and improve radio communications. This is very hard to develop as an exercise. You need a lot of moving parts.”

The race provided those moving parts. Palomar Mountain, in northern San Diego County, rises to over 6,000 feet and has only two paved roads. On race day, snow persisted above the 4,500-foot level. The mountain community of about 200 residents expected as many as 5,000 visitors to crowd the course, with no motorized traffic permitted while the race came through the 29-mile section of the mountain road.

For ICS practice, CERT and ham radio volunteers were located at an Incident Command Post on the mountain summit. They maintained communication with all the teams across the exercise area. Wall maps of the area were posted, with identification of the sub-sections and team locations, call boxes, mile markers, and other references. Concurrently, the local fire department was able to use the CERT communication network to maintain awareness of conditions over the entire course.

For the communication portion of the exercise, the course was divided into sections to be covered by groups of four to six CERT volunteers who patrolled on foot, bicycle, or car. All groups used amateur radio and the Family Radio Service (FRS) for communication. They regularly reported in on crowd and traffic conditions, race progress, and any notable events using selected radio bands and correct terminology.

“*The race was a great format to put our team out there to understand and use ICS and radio communications.*”

– Bill Leininger,
San Diego County CERT Coordinator

CERT members had 10 days to prepare for the exercise. “It was a crazy, tight deadline,” said Leininger. “We needed to plan supplies and meals. We had to recruit volunteers. We set up a Web site, and it worked great. It was helpful for coordinating volunteers — providing assignments and documents for downloading.”

Although San Diego CERT was able to get the word

out through its Web site, Leininger feels that a longer planning time would have been beneficial. For program coordinators, “Make sure your event is manageable within your timeframe,” he said. Also, repeated notifications were important to remind volunteers of schedules, etc. “There were a number of no-shows, so you need to be flexible,” he said.

For a future exercise, Leininger said he would give teams unexpected scenarios to respond to. But for this event, “It would have been too much.” However, there was one real-life unexpected scenario during the event — a volunteer found a body in the woods. Local police immediately took over responsibility of the situation.

“*Make sure your event is manageable within your timeframe.*”

– Bill Leininger,
San Diego County CERT Coordinator

At the conclusion of the 10-hour exercise, all volunteers reported feeling much more comfortable with their radio skills and how they fit into the ICS. “The race was a great format to put our team out there to understand and use ICS and radio communications,” said Leininger.



CERT volunteers gather to discuss their roles in the exercise.

Oregon and Washington State Programs Hold Ninth CERT Rodeo

City of Hillsboro, Ore. Emergency Manager Sharon Kennedy knows what makes a good CERT rodeo. Hillsboro and a coalition of local CERT programs in northwestern Oregon and southwestern Washington State began holding rodeos in 1998, and held their ninth in September 2009. The event is open to CERT members in Washington, Columbia, Clackamas and Multnomah counties in Oregon and Clark County in Washington, and each local program participates in designing, planning, and conducting the event.



A CERT volunteer tends to a mock victim during one of the rodeo's events.

Kennedy has been involved with each one. She credits a detailed and organized design plan for the rodeo's continued success. The plan "hasn't changed much at all" since the beginning, she says. "We get a few more people each

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Greetings from the National CERT Program

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eight stories selected for this issue are geographically diverse and represent a variety of exercises—CERTs responding to a simulated plane crash, integrating an exercise into a real-life Tour of California bike race, competing in multi-jurisdictional CERT rodeos, and more. It's evident from these and other stories submitted that designing, developing, and conducting these exercises required a lot of time and effort. And equally clear that CERT members, trainers, and coordinators are a creative and industrious group. Hats off to the local CERT programs featured in this issue and to every CERT program that provides training drills and exercises to build team capabilities and individual members' skills!

We thank everyone who has submitted exercise stories to the National Newsletter, and we'd also like to ask if you'd be willing to share a few more details on these training and evaluation efforts. Our goal is to create a collection of CERT drills and exercises on the national CERT Web site that would be available for download and use by local CERT programs across the country. We know how many local programs have already gone beyond the exercise at the end of the CERT Basic Training Course and have developed additional drills, tabletops, and exercises. We hope you'll be willing to contribute them for use by other local programs. Contributing CERT programs will be acknowledged in the materials we post to the Web site.

If you'd like to contribute to the collection of CERT drills, tabletops, and functional or full-scale exercises,

please send your materials electronically, including the following for each drill, tabletop, or exercise:

- Your contact information
- Programs and agencies involved in designing and conducting the event
- Training/evaluation objective(s) of the drill, tabletop, or exercise
- Scenario
- For tabletops and exercises, messages/injects delivered to players as the event progresses
- Documentation (e.g., maps and other supporting material used by the teams during the event)
- Logistical considerations such as number of trainers, CERT members, and other participants such as "victims," any necessary equipment and supplies, etc.
- Lessons learned and any advice to others planning to use your drill or exercise design

If you have material you'd like to share, we need to receive it by December 4, 2009. Please send it to Kathy Adams-House at PerformTech, the contractor assisting with this project:

kadamshouse@performtech.com.

We hope you enjoy this issue of the newsletter and that these stories will give you some good ideas for your program. Please keep sending in your stories about all your program's activities. Our thanks to every CERT member, trainer, coordinator, and advocate for all you do to help keep your community safe, and for all you contribute to the CERT community across the nation.

Oregon and Washington State Programs Hold Ninth CERT Rodeo

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time, but the basic plan of dividing into teams and rotating them into stations is the same.” Even the rodeo T-shirt is basically the same. “We have the same photo, but each year the shirt is a different color,” said Kennedy. “People like to collect them each year.”

The original objectives have continued to guide each of the nine rodeos. These include providing rigorous skills drills in an atmosphere of friendly competition, with good evaluation and feedback to each team; creating a venue for CERT members and trainers from different programs to meet and compare notes; and raising the visibility of CERT to community members and officials.



A multi-jurisdictional CERT rodeo team gets a 10-minute refresher before conducting their station exercise.

Each rodeo consists of five skills stations and five demonstration stations that teams rotate through. The skills stations cover basic training and are usually the same year to year, said Kennedy, including fire extinguishers, medical triage, victim extrication and transport, bandaging and splinting, and search and rescue. The latter is accomplished with a search maze. Each station exercise takes 30 minutes, with a 10-minute refresher by CERT trainers beforehand. “CERT members never go into skills without a brief refresher first,” said Kennedy.

Trainers at each skills station use forms to evaluate each team and scores are quickly combined at day’s end to determine an overall winning team and winners in each of a

number of categories. Every team is recognized with a prize at the end of the hotwash.

“ *Participants get to meet people from other programs, compare notes, and come back to their own CERT program with ideas.* ”

*– Sharon Kennedy,
City of Hillsboro, Ore.
Emergency Manager*

The five demonstration stations, set up between the skills stations, cover topics that the CERT rodeo design team thinks would be interesting to the participants, said Kennedy. “If something goes particularly well, we repeat it every other rodeo,” said Kennedy. “Every year is a little bit different.” Examples of past demonstration sessions include a canine search team, survival hygiene, how to set up a Red Cross shelter, heavy cribbing, sandbagging, rope rescue for someone in water, and how to set up point-of-dispensing (POD) sites for immunizations. The latter is a timely demonstration that is repeated often. “This year we’re doing survival fire safety for the first time,” she said.

Up to 120 members from the local CERT programs can participate, and they are divided into multi-jurisdictional teams. Kennedy says the random team assignments have always received a good response from participants. The assignments lead to networking that highlights similarities and differences among programs, and raises awareness of what other teams are doing. “Participants get to meet people from other programs, compare notes, and come back to their own CERT program with ideas.”

Although community members are not permitted to watch because of possible safety hazards, the rodeo does use 40 community volunteers to staff tents and pose as victims. Boy Scout troops and high school drama clubs have participated in the past.

For other CERT programs thinking of holding their own rodeos, Kennedy recommends downplaying the competitive aspect. “We think they gain more by networking with each other. We think people are more willing to attend, and it makes it more fun,” she said. “We started that way, and we’ve never changed it.”

Coshocton, Ohio CERT Practices Search and Rescue Skills

Coshocton, Ohio CERT members had their work cut out for them during a search and rescue exercise held in November 2008. The CERT members completed search and rescue classroom training, and the exercise was a chance for them to put those skills to the test.

During the exercise, which was held at a local park, the team was presented with three scenarios: A missing 3-year-old girl, a missing 8-year-old boy with autism, and a missing person presumed dead. The latter two scenarios involved the CERT members assisting with a canine search.

“The point of the exercise was to apply search and rescue skills from the classroom to the field,” said Rose Jones, Coshocton CERT coordinator and instructor. “In the classroom, they learned how to use maps, GPS systems, and how to look for clues. The team also learned not to touch anything we shouldn’t be touching, in case it would turn out to be something the police would need to investigate,” Jones added. “It doesn’t matter what the conditions are. We’ve got training on the proper way of being able to go in and rescue people, whether it’s out in the field or inside a building.”

The first search used a doll as the missing 3-year-old girl and was completed in approximately 4 hours. Clues included clothing, a child’s drinking cup, and various toys. In the two scenarios using canine search teams, the CERT members did not handle the dogs directly. They worked



CERT members locate a missing person during a search and rescue exercise.

with the canine group and saw first-hand how the dogs reacted to different scents.

“The search dogs knew the difference between the scents of children, medications, and the deceased. Our members learned how to mark clues and to not mess with the marks in order to protect evidence,” said Jones. She added that members learned to stay out of the way of the dogs and let them do their jobs. They also learned they need to be in shape because search and rescue can be a physically trying task.

“ It doesn’t matter what the conditions are. We’ve got training on the proper way of being able to go in and rescue people, whether it’s out in the field or inside a building. ”

*– Rose Jones,
Coshocton CERT Coordinator*



Coshocton CERT members after participating in the search and rescue exercise.

Planning for the search and rescue exercise began one month before the event. “We try to do an exercise once a year” for both experienced and new members, said Jones. “We like to keep this exercise going and updating it with new ways of doing search and rescue.”

Jones advises other CERT program coordinators to plan out their exercise. “Be prepared for whatever comes at you,” she said. “Have a Plan A, Plan B, and a Plan C. Basically have a backup plan.” She added, “We want the community to know that CERT is available for them. We are available to help in a proper manner because we are properly trained.”

Fanwood, N.J. CERT Holds First Emergency Drill



CERT members participate in a fire emergency drill in Fanwood, N.J.

Since an emergency can affect a community and its citizens with little or no warning, Fanwood, N.J. CERT recently co-hosted a mock emergency drill to ensure their members are prepared to help shelter their community when a disaster strikes.

Fanwood CERT, along with area Red Cross chapters, co-hosted the training drill at a local park in June 2009. The drill simulated a fire emergency, where CERT members were instrumental in helping to open a community shelter. Red Cross chapters in New Jersey have a goal — to be able to shelter 10 percent of the population in the event of a significant disaster.

“We wanted to show local officials that they have trained resources in the event of an emergency,” said Mike Prasad, team leader for the Fanwood CERT. “It was also an opportunity to show the Red Cross that CERT can help them in setting up cots, crowd control, public information, and feeding victims.”

“We also wanted to put our classroom lessons to practical use,” he said. “This was an opportunity to get advanced training for our CERT members and put to use existing training, like triage and organization and communication.”

This drill, which was the first emergency exercise to be

held in the town of Fanwood, provided an opportunity for CERT members to focus on how to set up and open a shelter. CERT volunteers also monitored and tracked the movement of the victims to the shelter and then assisted with checking them in and providing them with food.

Fanwood CERT started planning the drill six months prior to the event. “We had three meetings prior, plus a table-top exercise on how everything was going to work,” said Prasad. “It was more a functional drill, to learn roles. They needed to learn their role and do it right the first time without any special challenges. We didn’t want to throw in monkey wrenches or unplanned events.”

However, Prasad doesn’t rule this out for the next drill. “We need to take it in phases. Maybe next time we throw in extra challenges, such as having a person in the shelter that doesn’t have a tag for patient tracking. What would you do then?” Also for the next drill, Prasad would like to see volunteers split into two teams, one team to run the logistics of the drill and one team to participate in the drill.

“ *This was an opportunity to get advanced training for our CERT members and put to use existing training, like triage and organization and communication.* ”

– Mike Prasad,
Fanwood CERT Team Leader

A post-drill meeting was held the week after the drill; however, attendance was disappointing. Volunteers were sent e-mails to solicit feedback on the event, and this proved to be more productive. Next time Prasad will recommend conducting a hotwash evaluation meeting right after the exercise to elicit feedback from participants.

To other CERT program coordinators, Prasad recommends budgeting ample time and resources for an exercise. He also recommends that CERT members take Red Cross shelter training. “There is a definite shelter need for special needs populations and pets, and CERT can help.”

Orange County, Texas CERT Wins Harris County Rodeo



CERTs from across Texas gathered in February 2009 to participate in a statewide CERT rodeo. Photo courtesy of Harris County Citizen Corps.

In February 2009, CERTs from across Texas gathered in Humble, Texas, to test their emergency response skills in a one-day CERT Rodeo at the Harris County Fire & Sheriff's Training Academy. The team from Orange County, which included a few members of the nearby Jefferson County CERT, took home first-place honors.

Orange County Emergency Management Coordinator Jeff Kelley likes the rodeo because it taps into the existing knowledge base of CERT members. "The competition is based on the skills that each CERT member is required to master before graduating from the CERT training," he said. "We participate every year." The Orange County CERT, which boasts approximately 100 members, won second place last year.

Franklin Walters, Orange County Deputy Emergency Management Coordinator, works with the Orange County CERT to help set up classes and ensure that instructors have proper supplies. He downplayed the competition aspect of the event. "The rodeo is mainly designed not to see who the better CERT is but to get people out there to practice their skills and see how proficient they are."

This was the third consecutive year Harris County has held a rodeo for area CERTs. Its staging of the rodeo is in keeping with its mission "to make Harris County and the

surrounding area communities safer, stronger, and better prepared through service and volunteerism that focuses on emergency preparedness and public safety." Fifteen teams – composed of members from 59 regional CERTs – participated in the rodeo-style competition. Each event was timed and graded, with scores based on accuracy, speed, and proper use of CERT skills.

This year 15 CERT members from Orange and Jefferson counties participated in the competition. They even got together ahead of time to review some of the skills that would be tested.

CERT members were able to have a little fun while practicing their skills at 10 hands-on stations. Areas covered were triage, medical treatment, a gang plank team-building exercise, tower search and rescue, fire suppression, patient transport, evidence recovery, cribbing, sizeup, and Incident Command. For the Incident Command Post, each team selected a member to serve as the Incident Commander (IC) for the entire event. The IC kept the team organized throughout the day, reporting scores for each event and handling communication and documentation.

"Our team seems to enjoy every event," said Kelley. "But they always excel in the Incident Command and the medical triage."

The triage exercise gave teams five minutes to triage 25 patients with injuries listed on cards. Each team then sorted the cards into the triage categories: Immediate, Delayed, or Dead. The teams were given an additional five minutes to reevaluate and triage again. To score well, teams had to make accurate assessments on the patients while working quickly.

Teams also extinguished a fire using the PASS method; removed a victim using cribbing; and conducted a sizeup of a mock train derailment. Whatever the exercise, each team worked together to complete the task. Team members gathered facts, assessed damage, considered probabilities, assessed each situation, and established priorities – all good practice for a real-life situation.

"Everyone out there... enjoyed themselves," said Walters. "We'll be participating in the rodeo for as long as they continue to invite us."

Norfolk, Va. CERT Conducts Mock Plane Crash Exercise

It could happen anywhere. A small plane crashes in a local park with 20+ people on board. In this case, the location is a busy park in Norfolk, Va., where kids are on the ball field, people are in the bleachers, youngsters are in the playground, and adults are at the clubhouse.

Norfolk CERT conducted a training exercise using this scenario in late April 2009. The plane, simulated by a school bus, had broken into sections after the crash and some of the passengers and crew were ejected. In addition, parts of the plane were scattered in many directions, which resulted in injuries to people on the ground.

“*We broke CERTs into groups... Who was prepared to deal with this situation? Could they take orders from people they didn't know? Who could do first aid?*”

– Scott Mahone,
City of Norfolk CERT Manager

and carried patients away to a safe medical area.

CERTs were tested when their own members fell injured. “We broke CERTs into groups,” said Scott Mahone, CERT manager for the City of Norfolk. “We instructed some members to fall and get injured. Who was prepared to deal with this situation? Could they take orders from people they didn't know? Who could do first aid?”

Planning for the June exercise began in late January. “You can organize and plan, but in reality things change,” said Mahone. “Triage was short-staffed. Volunteers wanted to go out in the field. We learned you've got to set stuff up — who is going to do what. Not everyone can be a rescuer. Some people have to be caretakers.” It was a good lesson learned about CERT operations.

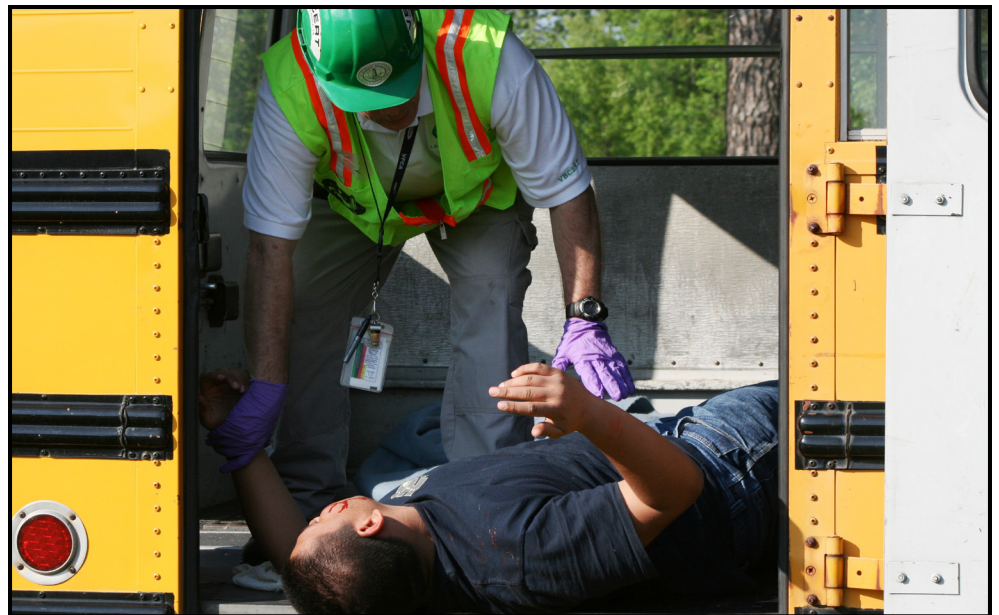
Mahone was pleased that the exercise received a lot of cooperation from the City of Norfolk. The event included

several fires that CERT members had to put out. He advised that CERT exercises be flexible. “Make it open to everyone. Know in general what you want to do and what you want to test. Do you want to practice medical skills? Organizational skills?” Mahone also recommended that project coordinators “take all the help you can get. The more people you involve, the better. Don't limit an exercise to only your city or town. When something real hits, it is going to involve more than just your area.”

Coordination with different groups proved to be an easy challenge, said Mahone, as everyone was eager to participate and help in any way. “We learned a lot about teamwork and what needs to be done in a crisis. Yes, we made a few mistakes, but at the debriefing after the exercise, we learned what we could do to correct any problems. Overall the exercise was deemed a success.”

In this exercise, area CERT members from Norfolk, Virginia Beach, and Portsmouth responded to a message from Norfolk's Emergency Center to assist in a search and rescue operation. CERT members were involved in setting up a command center, assisting victims, and managing the emergency site.

The objectives of the exercise were to test organizational and communication skills, as well as to practice using the Incident Command System (ICS) and working with people from different areas who were also responding to the emergency situation. The exercise included more than 35 local volunteers who participated as victims. CERT members performed triage in the field



A CERT member in Norfolk, Va., practices rescuing an injured victim at a search and rescue exercise in April 2009.

Ogden, Utah CERT Prepares for Earthquake Response

It's a typical, sleepy Saturday morning in June 2009. Ogden, Utah, residents are enjoying the beginning of the lazy, summer weekend. Then, at 7:45 a.m., a 6.5 magnitude earthquake strikes the city, causing damage that includes a train derailment and burning homes.

Ogden City CERT members participated in a citywide exercise to prepare for how an earthquake could cause widespread devastation in Ogden and its surrounding areas.

Part of the exercise was located in an area being cleared for redevelopment. Residents witnessed the heavy smoke that can accompany burning homes, when two abandoned houses were lit by the fire department. A third abandoned house was damaged by the heat of the fire, and the fire department decided to burn it as well.

The exercise scenario also included a pretend train derailment that may have spilled hazardous chemicals. CERT volunteers knocked on doors of homes close to the derailment to evacuate residents. "Residents were not given advance notice of the exercise; however, they were told it was just a drill," said CERT coordinator Fred Dreis.

"Natural disasters are fluid," said Dreis. "CERT conducted a welfare check of the city." For a population of 72,000 like Ogden, Dreis said prior logistics planning is essential, such as dealing with crowds and getting people to staging areas.

The staging areas were mostly local churches known for organizing volunteers quickly.

Planning began approximately eight weeks prior to the earthquake exercise. Organizers were hoping for 2,000 volunteers, and 1,200 Ogden residents participated. "This exercise was a great success," said Dreis. "We have a strong religious base here and got a 50-75% response. Mission accomplished."

Dreis conceded that you can never have too many people participating in an emergency exercise. "This was a huge undertaking. It's the first time a city of this size took on this kind of effort. There were chaotic moments, of course, but it was taken in stride. We get a lot of respect from the community."

Dreis feels that building CERT membership is critical. "We need more CERT personnel who are trained and motivated. Well-trained volunteers are CERT's highest commodity. The challenge is getting people interested and trained. We need to nurture membership."

After participating in this exercise, Ogden City CERT members feel they are prepared to handle a real emergency. This exercise was a huge confidence-builder. We know we're going to do okay," said Dreis.

Georgia Holds First Statewide CERT Competition

When the Georgia Emergency Management Agency (GEMA) decided to hold its first regional CERT competition, officials saw it as a chance to provide statewide exposure for a burgeoning CERT program.

The agency also wanted to use the event to promote preparedness measures and update trainers and leaders on CERT procedures. As for a location to do all of this, organizers knew just where to look – Henry County, home of one of those burgeoning CERT programs.

Henry County has been training citizens in the CERT program for two years and currently has 187 volunteers. "We have done some partnerships with them and have a pretty active program," said Don Ash, director of the Henry County Emergency Management Agency.

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CERT members worked with evaluators from the Georgia Emergency Management Agency in a statewide CERT competition. Photo courtesy of Captain Stan Pye.

Georgia Holds First Statewide CERT Competition

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CERT members on their way to another station.

Henry County CERT officials began talking to GEMA in November 2008 about hosting the competition. “We’re pretty new,” said Ash, “but have several venues big enough to accommodate what they hoped to accomplish.”

Six CERTs participated in the competition held Saturday, April 4, 2009, at the Jason T. Harper Event Center at Heritage Park in McDonough in central Georgia. Participating programs came from Peachtree City and Forsyth, Cobb, DeKalb, Chatham, and Henry counties. The Chatham County CERT traveled more than 200 miles from the southeastern part of the state to attend the competition.

Georgia had floods and more than a few severe storms during the spring. Ash said that two emergency disaster declarations prevented a larger turnout: “We had two actual emergencies, so not as many teams were able to participate.”

Henry County CERT officials worked with the state to determine what events would work best in the competition, said Ash. They then designed events that would allow CERT members to practice what they learned during classroom training. CERTs competed in events involving fire suppression, disaster medical operations, disaster psychology, and triage.

Captain Stan Pye of the Peachtree City Police Department noted the importance of CERT training. “These skills are very essential to everyday life,” he said. “We have had several members use these skills in their daily activities.”

Trainers evaluated the team response at each station and

awarded points based on performance. At the end of the day, scores were calculated and awards given to the top teams. Awards included Rescue Randy mannequins, refillable fire extinguishers, starter moulage kits, and new CERT kits. Organizers wanted the awards to be training aids for advancing local CERT programs; every local program left with something.

The Peachtree City CERT finished first overall in the competition. The program was established by the Peachtree City Police Department in 2005 and currently has more than 200 volunteers. “This group has formed a very tight bond,” said Pye, who oversees the city’s CERT program. The team’s favorite part of the challenge was the preparation. The members spent more than four months training, said Pye. “They dedicated well over 60 hours of their own time after work hours to make sure they had the skills and knowledge they needed. The day itself just brought it all together.”

“*The competitions are excellent to both build team skills and to promote the overall mission of CERT.*”

– Captain Stan Pye,
Peachtree City Police Department

The competition was only one part of the event. GEMA also wanted to update trainers and team leaders on CERT procedures. This was accomplished with two days of Train-the-Trainer classes before the team competition was held on Saturday. This was especially helpful for new programs. And, in an effort to reach out to the community, GEMA also set up public safety displays to highlight the benefits of the program. It was all a part of GEMA’s goal of stimulating interest in the CERT program across the state. “The competitions are excellent to both build team skills and to promote the overall mission of CERT,” said Pye.

Ash stressed the networking opportunities of the event. “We learned a lot about how to recruit and retain,” he said. “[We had] a lot of discussion on the need for ongoing training and development to keep people interested and active in the program.”

Based on the response to the event, Ash believes the state will see similar competitions in the future. “It was an opportunity to discuss and use best practices,” he said. “Competition really wasn’t the focal point of it.”



FAQ

Q: Is the CERT logo available for us to use on our team materials?

A: The CERT logo is available for use by CERT Programs that have been approved by their State CERT Coordinator (or the State Citizen Corps Coordinator if there isn't a State CERT Coordinator). All approved and registered CERT Programs listed on the CERT Web site have permission to use the CERT logo and also have been issued a password to access the logo in various formats on the Citizen Corps Web site. All State CERT Coordinators also have the authority to distribute the CERT logo to approved local CERT Programs within their state.

If your local CERT Program is not yet approved, you will not be able to use the logo on your materials. Also, the CERT logo is not to be used in any way or manner that implies the endorsement of any person, product, program, or service, or on any commercial products such as backpacks or emergency kit items that are intended to be sold to the general public.

The CERT logo is available for download on the Web site in four different formats. Select the format based on the intended use of the logo graphic:

- EPS format: Used for commercial printing; image editing software is usually needed to open an EPS file.
- TIF format: Can be used for commercial printing and can also be imported into a Microsoft Office document.
- JPG format: Best used for importing into a Microsoft document; can also be used for a Web site.
- GIF format: Intended exclusively for online use; should NOT be used for printed documents.

Contact your State CERT Coordinator (or Citizen Corps Coordinator) with any questions regarding your local CERT. They should be able to assist you with accessing the CERT logo. You can also contact the National CERT Office with any questions at cert@dhs.gov. Remember to include "CERT Logo" in the subject line.

Submitting Stories to the CERT National Newsletter

The CERT National Newsletter is published quarterly and welcomes stories from local, state, tribal, and territorial CERT Programs. For example:

- CERT in Action – Activations in actual emergencies
- CERT exercises you have conducted
- A CERT member who has gone above and beyond the call of duty
- Community awards/commendations your CERT Program/teams have received
- Innovative ways you have dealt with challenges in your CERT Program

When submitting a story, please include:

- City/state of event
- Names of people/organizations involved
- Date(s) of activity
- Author's contact information
- Other relevant information

Format: Articles should be between 50 and 150 words. Submit text as a Microsoft Word file or paste article text directly to e-mail. (PDF files cannot be used.)

Photos: Submit as an e-mail attachment in JPG or TIF file format. Include names of people in photo and a description of what they are doing and why. Please provide only photos approved for publication.

Deadline: Articles considered for the next publication must be received by November 30, 2009. Send your articles to cert@dhs.gov. Include in subject line: "Submission for CERT Newsletter."

Note: CERT retains the right to edit all stories for length, clarity, and accuracy.

Acceptance: Publication of submitted materials is based on a variety of factors, including but not limited to timeliness, space available, completeness of information, and relevance.