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## Community Emergency Response Team

The Westshore Council of Governments has begun a Community Emergency Response Team known as CERT. This regional volunteer program will support Westshore safety forces in helping prepare for, cope with, and recover from emergencies and disasters.

The CERT program provides disaster education and emergency preparedness, develop a system for volunteer response to community needs during public health emergencies, assist in the establishment of emergency shelters, and provide assistance to local forces under the direction of their local fire departments.

For dates of upcoming training classes, [click here](#).

For an outline of CERT training and their roles in emergencies see [page 2](#).

If you are interested in volunteering, please call 440-871-3300 for further information or link to the CERT Westshore website [www.certwestshore.com](http://www.certwestshore.com)

A CERT volunteer application is [available here](#).

Homeland Security Non-Disclosure Agreement [available here](#).

## **CERT Training: Preparing for Emergency Response**

**CERT personnel train to prepare for a disaster or overwhelming event by:**

- **Identifying and mitigating potential hazards in the home and workplace.**
- **Initiating plans to prepare themselves and loved ones for the hazards they face.**
- **Learning skills to help themselves, loved ones, and neighbors or fellow employees until professional responders arrive.**
- **Working cooperatively as a team within their neighborhoods or workplaces.**
- **Maintaining a relationship with the agency that sponsors the CERT program.**
- **Participating in continuing education and training.**
- **Volunteering for projects to enhance the public safety of their communities.**
- **Understanding their capabilities and limitations when deployed.**

**During training, CERTs learn to:**

- **Prepare for the hazards that threaten their communities**
- **Apply size-up and safety principles.**
- **Locate and turn off utilities.**
- **Extinguish small fires.**
- **Identify hazardous material situations.**
- **Triage and treat victims.**
- **Set up a medical treatment area.**
- **Conduct searches and rescues in lightly and moderately damaged structures.**
- **Understand the psychological impact of a disaster on themselves and others.**
- **Organize CERT members and spontaneous volunteers for an effective and safe response.**
- **Apply response skills in a disaster simulation.**

## **CERT Roles During Emergencies**

**When a disaster or overwhelming event occurs and responders are not immediately available CERTs can assist by:**

- **Conducting an initial size-up in their homes or workplaces.**
- **Reducing immediate dangers by turning off utilities, suppressing small fires, evacuating the area, and helping others.**
- **Treating people in the immediate area.**
- **Working with CERT members and volunteers to establish a command post, staging area, and medical triage and treatment areas.**
- **Collecting damage information and developing a plan of operations based on life saving priorities and resources available.**
- **Applying their training to situations where CERT can make a difference.**
- **Establishing and maintaining communications with professional first responders.**