

# Where did CERT come from?

In 1985 a group of Los Angeles City officials traveled to Japan to study the country's extensive earthquake preparedness plan. They encountered a highly uniform society that had taken extensive steps to train entire neighborhood in disaster preparedness. These neighborhood teams were trained in fire suppression, light search and rescue operations, first aid and evacuation.

Later that same year Los Angeles City investigation teams were sent to Mexico City following their 8.1 magnitude earthquake. They found that civilians were responsible for over 800 successful rescues, yet because they were not properly trained more than 100 of the volunteers died during the effort.

Armed with the lessons from both Japan and Mexico City, the Los Angeles City Fire Department began to develop a pilot program that would train neighborhoods in basic disaster response skills. The first team of 30 community members completed their training in early 1986.

Less than a year later, the need for a program such as the one piloted just a year earlier became vividly clear. Following the 1987 Whittier Narrows earthquake the City of Los Angeles took an aggressive role by creating their Disaster Preparedness Division. This division was tasked with training and educating communities and neighborhoods on disaster preparedness. It was here that CERT was born.

In 1993 the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) made the program available to communities nationwide and now all 50 states, three territories and six foreign countries are using the CERT training program.

## Join the Team Today!

For information on the next CERT cycle  
and to reserve your spot on the team visit  
[www.firedepartment.org/CERT](http://www.firedepartment.org/CERT)

# Join the Team



# Community Emergency Response Team

# CERT

San Ramon Valley Fire Protection District  
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CERT is made possible through the  
San Ramon Valley Citizen Corps Council



The Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Program educates community members about disaster preparedness for hazards that may impact you, your family and neighbors. CERT trains participants in basic disaster response skills. During this 20 hour course students learn disaster preparedness, fire safety, disaster medical operations and triage, light search and rescue, team organization, disaster psychology, terrorism & the Incident Command System. Those who complete the CERT program are better prepared to respond to and recover from a disaster! Join the team today!

### Disaster Preparedness

Outlines actions participants and their families can take before, during and after a disaster. The response role of civilians who become disaster service workers is explored including laws regarding volunteer service. The CERT concept and organization is also discussed.

### Disaster Fire Suppression

A brief overview of fire chemistry, hazardous materials, fire hazards and suppression strategies is reviewed. A majority of the evening is spent learning how to safely use a fire extinguisher, sizing up the situation, and responding to utility hazards.

### Disaster Medical Operations

This session teaches how to assess critical medical needs, the head-to-toe assessment method for patient evaluation and basic first aid. Instruction includes how to establish a medical treatment area to preform basic first aid in a safe and sanitary manner.

### Light Search and Rescue

Students learn how to plan, size-up, and properly search an area. They will be given techniques for proper rescue operations and most importantly how to keep themselves safe while helping others.

### Disaster Psychology & Team organization

Participants will learn how to recognize the signs and symptoms of stress which may be experienced by disaster victims and workers. Management principles and a more in depth look at the CERT organization will also be presented.

### Course Review & Disaster Simulation

Students will be encouraged to put everything they have learned into action during a hands-on practice drill.

### Refresher Sessions and Drills

Refresher sessions and drills help CERT graduates keep their skills current. A variety of drills and training opportunities are held each year.

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