



EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

MODULE 4: COMMUNITY EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM (CERT)

PURPOSE

The Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Program is administered by FEMA's Community Preparedness Division. CERT is a training program that prepares people to help themselves, their families and their neighbors in the event of a disaster in their community. Through CERT, citizens can learn about disaster preparedness and receive training in basic disaster response skills such as fire safety, light search and rescue, and disaster medical operations. With this training, volunteers can provide critical support by giving immediate assistance to victims before emergency first responders arrive on scene.

CERT volunteers also support the community year-round by participating in community preparedness outreach activities and distributing materials on disaster preparedness and education.

Visit the CERT website at <https://www.citizencorps.gov/cert/>

OBJECTIVES

1. Compare the goals and services of CERT with local Emergency Management Services (EMS) and the Medical Reserve Corps (MRC).
2. Identify the CERT services in the local community.
3. Analyze certification and training opportunities offered through CERT.
4. Identify sources for CERT equipment and disaster kit supplies.
5. Discuss the value of partnering with a local CERT chapter.

CONTENT

CERT works by providing training for citizens who are interested in learning basic disaster response skills. CERT training differs somewhat from EMT, CPR, and first aid training. Instead, CERT training has a specific focus on immediate response to mass casualties.

An example where CERT training would be helpful would be in the first few hours of responding to a neighborhood that is devastated by a tornado. CERT volunteers who live in the neighborhood will respond with the appropriate protective gear, and know how to participate in light search and rescue. They can treat life threatening conditions, triage victims, and participate in disaster medical operations.



CERT members typically assist others in their neighborhood or workplace following an event when professional responders are not immediately available to help. CERT members provide victim support until the EMS, Rescue Squad, or MRC arrives.

When a disaster strikes, it is normal for friends, neighbors, co-workers and bystanders to want to help. But the scene of a disaster can be a dangerous place. This was the case following the Mexico City earthquake where 100 untrained volunteers were killed trying to save others. Rescuer injury and fatalities can be prevented through the kind of training offered in CERT programs.

In addition to responding to disasters, CERT members also are encouraged to support emergency response agencies by taking a more active role in emergency preparedness projects in their community.

Your Role as a Health Science Teacher and HOSA Advisor

CERT training makes sense for the Health Science classroom and HOSA chapters. By giving students the opportunity to learn about CERT, you are reinforcing classroom emergency preparedness learning and giving students a chance to learn how to be an asset to their community.

CERT requires training beyond the classroom. Students can seek training through a local CERT program or online.



Contact Your Local CERT

Begin by contacting your local CERT organization. Go to “Find Nearby CERT’s” at <https://www.citizencorps.gov/cc/searchCert.do?submitByZip> and insert your zip code. You will be provided with one or more links to CERT programs in your area. Often you will be provided with specific weblinks for a CERT office, or contact information for a CERT leader in your area. The description provided may also provide information on local CERT instruction.

Another option would be to scroll through your state CERT directory at <https://www.citizencorps.gov/cc/CertIndex.do?submitByState>. Be aware that the list may not be completely up to date, and you may need to make a few phone calls to determine the best CERT office to meet your needs.

If there doesn’t seem to be a CERT program in your community, your students may be the catalyst to start one. Talk with your local Emergency Management Services, local government, and local fire department, and encourage them to consider beginning a CERT program. Information on bringing CERT to your community is found at <https://www.citizencorps.gov/cert/start.shtm>.

CERT in Your Classroom

The CERT website provides extensive training materials that you can use in your classroom. The menu bar on the CERT website includes links to:

- Training materials
- Video materials
- Supplemental information

The **training materials** include an online, independent study CERT course.

IS317 Course Overview

"Introduction to Community Emergency Response Teams", IS- 317, is an independent study course that serves as an introduction to CERT for those wanting to complete training or as a refresher for current team members. It has six modules with topics that include an Introduction to CERT, Fire Safety, Hazardous Material and Terrorist Incidents, Disaster Medical Operations, and Search and Rescue. It takes between six and eight hours to complete the course. Those successfully finishing it will receive a certification of completion and .8 CEU's from the Independent Study Office.

The entire set of instructor training materials can also be found on the CERT website at https://www.citizencorps.gov/cert/training_downloads.shtm

From this link you can download all the materials, or scroll down the page and open the units of your choosing in MS Word. The site contains the entire instructor manual, entire student manual, all course PowerPoints, lesson plans, and the option of downloading everything in Spanish.

The **video materials** include CERT demonstration materials and training the trainer videos at https://www.citizencorps.gov/cert/video_material.shtm.

The **supplemental information** includes:

- CERT Discussion Paper: Program Maintenance
- CERT Training at Winter Springs High School
- Wildfire Hazard Information
- Orlando, Florida Fire Department Pre-storm Hurricane Training Unit
- San Francisco Fire Department's NERT Drill -- Guidelines and tabletop exercise
- Expedient Flood Training Course -- Instructor guide and participant materials
- Disaster Simulation Photos
- CERT Field Operating Guide (FOG)
- Examples of CERT Volunteers in Action

Dressed for CERT



As you review the CERT curriculum, the need for rescuer safety is consistently reinforced throughout the program. Participants are reminded to wear safety equipment:

- Helmet
- Goggles
- Gloves
- Mask
- Boots

It is suggested that a time-saving technique is to wear latex gloves under their work gloves. Then, when they find a victim, they can remove their work gloves and are ready to work with the victim.

There are a number of websites that provide CERT equipment and supplies. Check out the following:



<http://www.cert-kits.com/>

PREPARESMART WELCOMES YOU TO OUR CertSmart STORE
http://preparesmart.com/Merchant2/merchant.mvc?Screen=CTGY&Category_Code=015



<http://ehsgear.stores.yahoo.net/cert.html>

Do an internet search on the keywords CERT and equipment to find additional CERT supply websites.

ASSIGNMENTS – MODULE 4

1. Complete the chart in Attachment 4-1 by comparing the services of CERT to those provided by your local Emergency Management Services (EMS) and to the services provided by the Medical Reserve Corps (MRC).
2. Find the CERT organization closest to you, and complete the information about your local CERT.

Title _____
Address _____
Contact _____
Contact information _____

3. You have the option of taking the entire CERT course online at <https://www.citizencorps.gov/cert/IS317/> It takes between six and eight hours to complete the course. Those successfully finishing it will receive a certification of completion and .8 CEU's from the Independent Study Office. Include a copy of your certificate as evidence of course completion.

OR

Go to the IS317 website at <https://www.citizencorps.gov/cert/IS317/> , select and read the lesson of our choice, then complete the Lesson Summary in Attachment 4-2.

4. Review the “Dressed for CERT” page. Based on what you have learned about CERT, the information on that page, and the websites you reviewed, what cost effective suggestion would you have for HOSA members in regards to obtaining “boots” for participating in the CERT competitive event?

5. Complete the information on Attachment 4-3, “The Value of Partnering with CERT.”

ATTACHMENT 4-1
EMERGENCY RESPONSE COMPARISON CHART

<i>Compare CERT to the local EMS...</i>	
How are they alike?	How are they different?

<i>Compare CERT to the MRC...</i>	
How are they alike?	How are they different?

ATTACHMENT 4-2
CERT ONLINE LESSON SUMMARY

Date completed _____

Lesson # and Title _____

Why did you choose this particular lesson?

Brief summary of the lesson

What did you learn in this lesson that you could integrate into your health science classroom?
