



The **Community Emergency Response Team (CERT)** Program educates people about disaster preparedness for hazards that may impact their area and trains them in basic disaster response skills, such as fire safety, light search and rescue, team organization, and disaster medical operations. Using the training learned in the classroom and during exercises, CERT members can assist others in their neighborhood or workplace following an event when professional responders are not immediately available to help. CERT members also are encouraged to support emergency response agencies by taking a more active role in emergency preparedness projects in their community.

People who go through CERT training have a better understanding of the potential threats to their home, workplace and community and can take the right steps to lessen the effects of these hazards on themselves, their homes or workplace. If a disaster happens that overwhelms local response capability, CERT members can apply the training learned in the classroom and during exercises to give critical support to their family, loved ones, neighbors or associates in their immediate area until help arrives. When help does arrive, CERTs provide useful information to responders and support their efforts, as directed, at the disaster site. CERT members can also assist with non-emergency projects that improve the safety of the community. CERTs have been used to distribute and/or install smoke alarms, replace smoke alarm batteries in the home of elderly, distribute disaster education material, provide services at special events, such as parades, sporting events, concerts and more.