

WEST HAVEN CITY COMMUNITY EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM (CERT) OPERATING MANUAL

INTRODUCTION AND HISTORY - <http://www.citizencorps.gov/cert>

Following a major disaster, first responders who provide fire and medical services may not be able to meet the demand for these services without significant community assistance. Communication failures, road damage, and multiple casualties are but some of the factors that will prevent people from accessing emergency services they routinely expect to be available at a moments notice by calling 911. During major disasters, people will have to rely on each other for help in order to meet their immediate life saving and life sustaining needs.

After the Mexico City earthquake, 800 spontaneous, untrained volunteers worked to save family members, fellow employees, and neighbors. Unfortunately, 100 of these volunteers lost their lives while attempting these rescues. It was determined in the follow up evaluation of the response to that disaster that if these people had had some basic training, those losses might have been prevented.

By watching and responding to events like the Mexico City Earthquake, the Los Angeles Fire Department (LAFD) recognized that citizens would likely be on their own during the early stages of a catastrophic disaster. The LAFD determined that providing some basic training in disaster survival and rescue to local residents would improve the ability of citizens to survive until responders or other assistance could arrive.

In 1985, the LAFD developed and implemented the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program. The CERT program teaches individuals basic disaster response skills such as: personal disaster preparedness, fire safety-fire extinguishers, disaster medical operations, light search and rescue, disaster psychology, terrorism awareness, hazmat awareness, and CERT team organization.

The training program, initiated by the LAFD, proved to be so beneficial that in 1993, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) made the CERT program available to communities nationwide.

CERT PROGRAM

- Helps prepare individuals, as volunteers, to take an active role in providing critical support to Emergency Management and Emergency Response Personnel during a disaster or emergency.
- Helps individuals know how to assist others effectively and efficiently without placing themselves in unnecessary danger.
- Helps individuals acquire the skills necessary to assist safely and effectively during a variety of assignments.

CERT MEMBERS

- Members may be utilized for a variety of assignments, including: emergency and disaster response, community events, special functions, etc.
- Members may be utilized in a variety of locations, such as in the: city, county, state, or nation.
- Members can be easily recognized by their green hard hats and green vests.

CERT MISSION - Do the greatest good for the greatest number of people.

CERT GOAL - Safety First!

BASIC TRAINING

CERT basic training is a 21 hour course which covers a variety of topics including: personal disaster preparedness, fire safety-fire extinguishers, disaster medical operations, light search and rescue, disaster psychology, terrorism awareness, hazmat awareness, and CERT organization.

CERT training is usually delivered in 3 hour sessions, one day a week, over a 7 week period. At the completion of the course, students participate in a mock exercise where acquired student skills are tested. Graduation is held at the completion of the disaster simulation. Students completing the course are awarded a CERT Certificate of Completion.

REFRESHER TRAINING

Periodic training is vital to maintaining emergency response skills. CERT members are encouraged to:

- Participate in CERT activities; such as: service projects, events, incidents, emergencies, etc. (see definitions)
- Participate in at least one training, exercise, and/or mock disaster annually
- Repeat or teach the basic CERT course at least once every three years

Training opportunities are available through a variety of agencies, some of which include:

- West Haven City www.westhavencity.com or 801-731-4519
- Weber County tfolkman@co.weber.ut.us or 801-778-6686
- Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) <http://training.fema.gov>
- Red Cross www.redcrossutah.org

EQUIPMENT

Each CERT student is issued:

- CERT manual
- CERT vest
- Goggles/Glasses
- CERT hard hat
- Work gloves

CERT members are encouraged to add items to their CERT emergency kit; items such as:

- Caution tape
- Masking tape
- Duct tape
- Triage tape
- Head lamp/flashlight
- Extra batteries/bulbs
- Light sticks
- Whistle
- Dust Mask
- Crescent wrench
- Multi tool kit/knife
- Scissors
- Poncho
- Mylar emergency blanket
- Note pad & pen/pencil
- Markers ó thin point
- Markers ó thick point
- Drinking water
- Water filter/purification tablets
- Emergency food
- Ziploc bag
- First aid kit

CERT members are responsible for maintaining and replenishing their own supplies. Members are encouraged to have and maintain a 72 hour kit.

WEST HAVEN CITY CERT MEMBERSHIP

To be a West Haven City CERT Member one needs to:

- Complete the 21 hour CERT training course and have a certificate of completion
- Be over the age of 18

SECURITY CLEARANCE

During an event, incident, or emergency, situations may arise where CERT volunteers may need to oversee valuables, property, or have direct contact with children. For this reason, all CERT volunteers are encouraged to obtain West Haven City CERT security clearance.

To obtain West Haven City CERT security clearance, one needs to:

- Register with West Haven City as an official CERT volunteer
- Pass a background check

REMOVAL FROM WEST HAVEN CITY CERT

CERT members must comply with the requirements of CERT training, as well as comply with all federal, state, and local laws when functioning as a CERT member. Individuals will be removed from West Haven City CERT for, but not limited to the following:

- Being convicted of a felony involving: violence, dishonesty, drugs, or sex
- Being registered as a sex offender
- Conduct unbecoming a member
- Any act of insubordination
- Neglect of duty
- Any flagrant violation of rules or guidelines

CERT OPERATIONS

The day-to-day operations of West Haven City CERT are under the direction of the West Haven City CERT governing body which consists of the President, Vice-President, and Secretary. The governing body is appointed and overseen by the West Haven City Emergency Manager. All CERT decisions are approved by majority vote of the governing body. Financial decisions are subject to the City's annual audit. The CERT governing body is authorized to spend an amount up to \$200.00. Any amount over \$200.00 must be approved by the West Haven City Emergency Manager.

CERT PRESIDENT

The responsibilities of the West Haven City CERT President include:

- Preside over all CERT meetings, special projects, and events
- Maintain a database of CERT trained personnel
- Inform CERT members of available trainings, exercises, and/or mock disasters
- Inform West Haven City citizens of available basic CERT training opportunities
- Maintain a calendar of activities that involve CERT teams
- Maintain a cache of CERT supplies
- Update information for the CERT portion of the City website
- Coordinate efforts with other City emergency response teams
- Develop and maintain a method of contacting CERT members (phone, email, radio, etc.)
- Encourage community preparedness

CERT VICE – PRESIDENT

The responsibilities of the West Haven City CERT Vice - President include:

- Perform functions of the President in his/her absence
- Assist and support the President upon request

CERT SECRETARY

The responsibilities of the West Haven City CERT Secretary include:

- Record minutes of meetings
- Bring past minutes to all official meetings
- Track financial purchases
- Perform duties that are usually required of a secretary

CERT MEETINGS

- CERT coordination meetings will be held at least annually
- CERT member meetings will be held at least annually

OFFICIAL ACTIVATION

West Haven City, or other appropriate emergency response agencies, may call upon CERT members to provide aid or assistance for a variety of activities. Some activities may include: emergencies, crowd control, lost person searches, celebrations, events, etc.

If activated, CERT members will follow the organizational structure outlined in these guidelines to insure accountability and safety of all members and the public served. CERT members will report to the official staging location or the alternate meeting location if one is designated.

SPONTANEOUS ACTIVATION

There are times when spontaneous activation may be necessary. In this situation, CERT members may need to work for a time without the direction of official emergency responders. In this case, CERT members are to respond to the emergency in this order:

- 1) Respond to immediate family/home needs first
- 2) Fulfill any neighborhood responsibilities
- 3) Report to the staging area with appropriate disaster supplies (Assess damages and problems while in route).

In the event of a major emergency, CERT members are to:

- Self-activate
- Work in groups of two or more persons at all times
- Coordinate team efforts

Conduct operations until emergency responders arrive to stabilize the situation and provide direction and leadership.

CERT ORGANIZATION

The first CERT member at the staging area becomes the initial Incident Commander for a response. The initial Incident Commander remains in that position, at the Command Post, until a more qualified individual arrives.

The CERT Incident Commander:

- Directs team activities
- Coordinates communications
- Oversee accountability actions
- Ensures the team accomplishes its mission which is: "Do the greatest good for the greatest number of people without placing CERT members in harm's way"

CERT Responsibilities:

- Identify the problem
- Determine the scope of the problem
- Establish an overall strategy
- Set priorities
- Deploy teams and resources
- Document actions and results

Team members will:

- Work in groups of two or more persons at all times
- Perform tasks as needed or assigned
- Will not attempt to perform tasks beyond their level of training

CERT STAGING LOCATION:

West Haven CERT members are to report to the following locations:

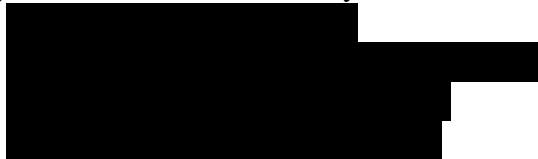
- Primary Staging Location:
West Haven City Hall, 4150 South 3900 West, West Haven
- Secondary Staging Location:
Ronald W. Schultz Maintenance Building, 2825 West 3300 South, West Haven

CERT CACHES:

Weber County & West Haven City maintains caches of equipment and supplies located at:



Keys for the caches are held by:



LIABILITY

CERT volunteers are considered "Good Samaritans" and are covered under the Volunteer Protection Act. If CERT members are officially activated, volunteers are covered under the City's liability insurance and workers compensation program.

COMMUNICATION

Cert members will communicate with others any way possible; to include, but not be limited to:

- Phone
- Radio (HAM/Amateur Radio, FSR/Family Service Radios, etc.)
- Television Communications
- Runner

CITY DATABASES

A CERT member database will be maintained by the CERT Program Manager/Emergency Manager and will be used for the purpose of communicating information among members.

CERT WEBSITE

Cert information and calendar of CERT events can be found on the City webpage at www.westhavencity.com

DEFINITIONS

EMERGENCY

An emergency is any situation that occurs suddenly or unexpectedly which creates an urgent need for action that results in a 911 response.

EVENT

An event is any scheduled activity.

INCIDENT

An incident is any un-scheduled activity that requires immediate coordination efforts to protect life, property, or to stabilize the occurrence. An incident may or may not be an officially declared disaster during the initial response.

INCIDENT COMMANDER

The Incident Commander is one who oversees an event or incident.

COMMAND POST

The location established by the Incident Commander as the central point for command and control of the event or incident.