



Press Release – August 29, 2019

Do you know how to prepare your family for a disaster? Do you know what to do to assist your neighbors during a disaster? Teton County's Emergency Management Office would like to help you and our community, become better prepared through the Community Emergency Response Team or CERT program.

The CERT program began after the Mexico City earthquake of 1985 where 800 people were rescued by untrained volunteers. However, 100 of those untrained volunteers lost their lives trying to assist the disaster victims. Recognizing the desire of people to help their neighbors the Los Angeles City Fire Department began a program to train everyday citizens in disaster preparedness and response. CERT training follows the mantra of doing the greatest good for the greatest number of people and teaches members to take care of their family and loved ones and then to assist those around them as the situation requires.

Following the success of the LA Fire Department the Federal Emergency Management Agency adopted the program and the training is now offered nationwide. If a disastrous event overwhelms or delays our professional first response, CERT members can assist others by applying the basic response skills that they learned during training. These skills can help save and sustain lives following a disaster until help arrives. CERT skills can also apply to more routine emergencies and not just disasters. CERT volunteers learn the following skills;

- Disaster Preparedness
- Basic Fire Suppression
- Disaster Medical Operations
- Light Urban Search & Rescue
- Incident Response Organization
- Disaster Psychology

These skills are taught through 18 hours of hands on training that will culminate in a mock disaster scenario that the participants will respond to. After the initial training CERT volunteers can meet to plan, practice and coordinate with first response agencies as well as assisting when needed during non-disaster incidents such as pre-planned events or disaster drills. "My favorite thing about the CERT training is that the classes are hands on. Participants will be putting out fires with fire extinguishers and treating simulated wounds." Said Greg Adams the Teton County Emergency Management Coordinator.

The Teton County Emergency Management Office in conjunction with Teton County Fire and Rescue is hosting a CERT class at the Driggs Fire Station with the following schedule:

- September 11 6 to 8 PM – General Preparedness
- September 12 6 to 8 PM – Basic Fire Suppression
- September 17 6 to 8 PM – Disaster Medical part 1
- September 18 6 to 8 PM – Disaster Medical part 2
- September 21 8 AM to 5 PM – Light Search & Rescue, Incident Command System, Disaster Psychology, Terrorism and the final exercise

For more information or to sign up for this free and exciting training contact the Teton County Emergency Management office at 208-354-2703.