The Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program is a nationally supported, locally implemented initiative that teaches people how to better prepare themselves for hazards that may affect their communities.

Local CERT programs, like the Citrus County Sheriff’s Office, train and organize teams of volunteers to assist their families, neighbors, co-workers, and other community members during emergencies when professional responders may not be immediately available to provide assistance. CERT is a partner organization with Volunteer Florida.

Before, during, and after disasters, CERT volunteer teams perform basic response activities, including checking on neighbors, distributing information to the public, supporting emergency operations centers, and helping to manage traffic and crowds.

The ability for CERT volunteers to perform these activities frees up career responders to focus their efforts on more complex, essential, and critical tasks. CERT volunteers also support their communities by organizing, promoting, and participating in emergency preparedness, community events, and assisting the Sheriff’s Emergency Management Division.

Want to take the free course?
Visit sheriffcitrus.org
Select ‘Volunteer Services’ ‘Volunteer Application’

CONTACT US
emergencymanagement@sheriffcitrus.org
352-249-2700
Citrus County Sheriff’s Office
Emergency Management Division
3549 Saunders Way
Lecanto, Florida 34461
Citrus County Sheriff's Office started their CERT program back in the early 1990’s. Since its inception, the program has grown to include technical training and further support of the Emergency Management Division. The team is 80 members strong and is always looking for more. The CERT team maintains four fully equipped deployment trailers to support local operations. A lot of what CERT has obtained has been through grants and donations.

Volunteer members have received training in the use of the Automatic External Defibrillator (AED), Narcan, and other specialized equipment. Many are licensed as amateur radio operators and can provide emergency communications during disasters. Several members are trainers in Stop the Bleed.

Do you want to learn how to take care of yourself during a disaster? Then come take our free training. Upon completion, you may decide to join our volunteer CERT program for more training and to deploy in the community.

WHAT YOU’LL LEARN

- DISASTER PREPAREDNESS
- LIGHT FIRE SUPPRESSION & SAFETY
- DISASTER MEDICAL OPERATIONS
- LIGHT SEARCH & RESCUE
- TEAM ORGANIZATION
- DISASTER PSYCHOLOGY
- TERRORISM
- BASIC FIRST AID
- CERT ORGANIZATION

HOW DID CERT BEGIN?

The Los Angeles Fire Department (LAFD) developed the CERT program after examining the civilian response to disasters in Mexico and Japan in 1985.

The LAFD recognized that citizens are likely to be on their own during the early stages of disaster. Under these circumstances, family members, co-workers, and neighbors will often spontaneously come to the aid of each other. While untrained volunteers can be very effective in aiding others, their lack of training puts them at risk for injury or death.

In response, the LAFD decided to develop and offer disaster response training to Los Angeles residents so that during and after future disasters volunteers would be able to assist in a safe, responsible, and effective manner.

The LAFD piloted the first CERT training in 1986. Building on this development, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) expanded the CERT materials in 1994 to make them applicable to all hazards and made the program available to communities nationwide.

Since that time, thousands of dedicated trainers, organizations, and citizens have embraced the responsibility to learn new skills and become prepared to execute safe and effective emergency response capabilities.

CERT MISSION:

TO PROMOTE RESILIENCY THROUGH PREPAREDNESS, RESPONSE, AND RECOVERY BY INCORPORATING BEST PRACTICES AND SHARING RESOURCES TO EMPOWER TRAINED VOLUNTEERS IN OUR COMMUNITIES.