

**Community Emergency Response Teams
(CERT)
Greene County, Missouri**

Organizational and Standard Operating Guidelines (SOG)

PURPOSE

CERT is a volunteer program that has been on the rise as more and more citizens have stepped forward to fulfill our nation's call to volunteerism. Utilizing spontaneous or affiliated volunteers, CERT can supplement manpower and increase overall scene effectiveness. Therefore, the purpose of this Standard Operating guideline is:

- To establish protocols for the use of CERT teams and how they are to be incorporated into the County-wide National Incident Management System (NIMS) during times of natural or manmade disasters or when events may require the utilization of CERT resources.
- To establish an understanding of the capabilities and limitations of CERT volunteers
- To establish an understanding of the CERT tier system
- To establish activation procedures
- To establish a procedure for injury or incident reporting involving CERT volunteers
- To outline training requirements

POLICY

- The incorporation of CERT member(s) into a disaster situation will be at the discretion of the Office of Emergency Management (OEM) Director in the Springfield/Greene County-metro area and by Emergency Management Directors for area municipalities.
- Any Incident Commander of a disaster scene may refuse to authorize the participation of a CERT member in emergency operations with good cause.
- Only CERT members with appropriate ID can be activated as a Greene County CERT volunteer. CERT members without proper ID may be utilized, but only as a spontaneous volunteer. (See Definitions for clarification of these roles.) This ID must be presented at all staging areas.
- Any personnel overseeing the activity of any volunteer need to ensure that the volunteer is utilizing safety equipment and following proper safety procedures. CERT members are issued gloves, helmets, goggles, and safety vests and should use these during emergency or disaster operations. Spontaneous volunteers may or may not possess such equipment and should be provided this equipment if available.

DEFINITIONS

CERT Volunteer- Is a member of the Community Emergency Response Team. CERT members have received basic training from personnel in the areas of disaster preparedness, fire suppression, first aid, light search and rescue, team building, and the incident management system. All CERT members are registered as volunteers with the Greene County Missouri Office of Emergency Management.

Incident- An occurrence or event, natural, technological or human caused, which requires a response to protect life or property. Incidents can for example, include major disasters, emergencies, terrorists attacks, terrorist threats, civil unrest, wild land and urban fires, floods, hazardous material spills, nuclear accidents, aircraft accidents, earthquakes, hurricanes, tornadoes, tropical storms, tsunamis, war related disasters, public health and medical emergencies, and other occurrences requiring an emergency response.

Event- A planned nonemergency activity (e.g., sporting event, concert, parade, etc.)

Emergency- Any situation that occurs suddenly or unexpectedly and creates an urgent need for action that results in a 911 response.

Disaster- Any situation of widespread destruction, or of a large enough magnitude to overwhelm the community's ability to handle it in a given amount of time. This may or may not be an officially declared disaster during the initial response.

Spontaneous Volunteer- Any individual who spontaneously provides assistance during a disaster or emergency without any expectation to do so placed on them by any entity. These individuals may or may not possess the training, equipment, or physical and/or psychological ability to handle the tasks they are undertaking. These volunteers may or may not be members of the CERT Program.

Affiliated Volunteer- Any volunteer that is formally assigned to an official organization(s) and that has been requested by an Emergency Management Office or responding agency to assist in an emergency or a disaster operation.

GUIDELINES

Utilizing Spontaneous Volunteers

Upon arrival at an emergency scene or disaster site, a first responder may find CERT members and other citizens engaged in emergency activities as spontaneous volunteers. Depending on the scope of the incident, the first responder may wish to maintain the operation of those volunteers who are performing critical functions, or that can be utilized in other capabilities. This will require a rapid size-up by the responder to ascertain the scope of the situation, the degree of volunteer assistance needed, the type of volunteer, and any hazards that may affect the safety of the volunteer(s).

Utilizing Affiliated Volunteers

An affiliated CERT member will work under Greene County CERT organizational structure. In the field, all CERT members will fall under the direction of the Incident Commander or designee. The decision to utilize CERT members is done at the discretion of the Emergency Management Director or Incident Commander.

Affiliated volunteers need to have specific instructions and be closely supervised. They must not be given any task that is beyond their scope of training or mental and/or physical ability to perform.

CERT members, as Greene County, Missouri volunteers, can assist with basic scene or supportive functions including:

- Basic first-aid
- Triage of victims
- Extinguishing of small incipient phase fires utilizing makeshift aids or with the use of fire extinguisher (Note: CERT members should not be in a position where smoke inhalation or heat endangers their safety)
- Light Search and Rescue to include cribbing, leveraging, and removal of patients from danger.
- May include; set-up of treatment areas, rehab, or similar sections.
- Maintaining accountability for fellow CERT members
- Supervising CERT sections or groups
- Any other operation required to remedy a given scenario that does not directly endanger the CERT member or move outside of his/her scope of practice.

Note: Many members of CERT have skills beyond what is taught through the CERT program (e.g., physicians and other health professionals, heavy equipment operators, etc.) While these skills may be helpful during an emergency or disaster, they are outside of the CERT scope-of-practice and are not authorized activities as a *CERT volunteer*. If a CERT member needs to perform his or her duties which would include any function outside the scope of CERT training, then the individual **MUST** sign out as a CERT volunteer with their appropriate supervisor on scene. CERT members are not permitted to direct traffic at intersections.

Accountability/ID Badges

All CERT members should have ID Badges. These should be recorded (or swiped) prior to sending the CERT member into a hazard area (if available) or, the member will sign in at the designated area. The CERT member should then again record their ID Badge number upon leaving the hazard area and or sign out. This accountability record may be kept by the CERT Manager at the designated staging areas, or by a designated Accountability Officer assigned by the Incident Commander. All CERT Badges will have an expiration date of 3 years from the date of acceptance. Any and all CERT badges previous from this date will be considered void.

Documentation

Information regarding the extent of activation needs to be documented anytime a CERT member is activated. This is the responsibility of the CERT Director. This information will be done utilizing the ICS format and forms.

- All CERT members that are involved in a disaster scene prior to activation will keep and maintain incident documentation. All documentation will be given to the Incident Commander or designee upon their arrival.
- ICS Form 214 (Daily Log) will be the primary form used by CERT volunteers. If forms are not readily available, then any type of documentation may be used until such forms become available.

- If a disaster or an event continues for more than 24 hours then the Office of the Emergency Management will provide the completed necessary ICS forms and will be given to the appropriate personnel in the field for the next operational period and each day there after or until no longer needed.
- Once the incident is resolved or members are no longer needed the supervising CERT member should deactivate the CERT teams as needed.
- Any activated CERT member that suffers an injury while performing an assigned task must immediately, without delay or considerable loss of time, report any injury incurred to the Greene County CERT Director or designee.

MEMBERSHIP

Greene County CERT Level System- CERT program consist of 3 levels:

- **Awareness Level:** This level is for those individuals interested in taking the course to take care of themselves and/or their family. This involves taking the basic course and receiving a certificate upon completion.
- **Level 1:** This level is for the individual who wants to be an active CERT volunteer in their neighborhood. The individual will receive a certificate upon completion of the course. This individual will also need to fill out all necessary paperwork; application, media release, hold harmless, and complete NIMS 100a. The member must also pass a background check (Individual responsible for costs). Upon completion of the above mentioned the individual will receive an ID Badge and a CERT pack if available. IS-242 Effective Communications is also highly encouraged as additional training at this level.
- **Level 2:** This level is for the member that is an active CERT volunteer and will respond if available when they may be needed. This individual will meet all **Level 1** criteria plus, must complete NIMS 200, 700 and 800. This includes any meetings, or acceptable organized events. Additional training: FEMA IS 230-Principles of Emergency Management and IS-241 Decision Making and Problem Solving. IS 244 Developing and Managing Volunteers and IS 240 Leadership and Influence are highly encouraged. Once at Level 2, a CERT member may apply for the CERT-Animal Response Team (CERT-ART) if interested.*

** See CERT-Animal Response Team (p. 5)*

The membership of Greene County CERT shall be volunteers of the community who are over the age of (18) or age (14) if accompanied or appropriate waiver by a parent or legal guardian, and have successfully completed the required Federal CERT training in conjunction with the Office of Emergency Management, Springfield-Greene County, Missouri or as determined by the OEM Director or CERT Director.

Individuals wishing to become Level 1 response or higher will be required to fill out all application forms and complete the background check. The forms will be provided at the beginning or final

training session of the CERT training program and will need to be returned to the Emergency Management Director, CERT Director or designee for consideration.

Persons participating in the Greene County CERT program agree to and will abide by the following rules and understand that members will be removed from membership for violation of the following:

- Conviction of a felony
- Conduct unbecoming of a member
- Any act of insubordination
- Neglect of duty
- Any flagrant violation of rules or guidelines governing this program
- Failure to maintain annual training hours
- Under no circumstances shall any CERT volunteer carry a firearm/weapon of any kind while participating in a program sponsored event, training or incident response.

CERT-ANIMAL RESPONSE TEAM

As a branch of Greene County CERT, the Animal Response Team (CERT-ART) will provide the coordination of local volunteer resources to support the registration and care of household pets in temporary shelters; before, during and after a natural or man-made emergency or disaster. In addition to emergency and disaster response, CERT-ART members will also work to educate the community on pet disaster preparedness. Due to the nature of the CERT-ART program, there will be additional, specialized training and a separate SOG for the Animal Response Team.

CERT OFFICIALS

- Greene County CERT Program will be structured with officers to oversee the organization and assist in the training and activation of members.
- Designated officers include the CERT Director, CERT Class Instructor(s), and each District Supervisor as outlined in the Organizational Chart.

ACTIVATION AND CALL- OUT PROCEDURES FOR TEAMS

- Primary Activation Procedures for any or all Greene County CERT members will be coordinated through the CERT Director of the Springfield/Greene County Office of Emergency Management or designee.
- The CERT Director may receive requests for activation by CERT District Supervisors, OEM Director, or public safety agency within Greene County. Such requests should occur when an emergency or other event requires additional human resources for assistance and will follow the Chain of Command as outlined in the Chain of Command Structure.
- The CERT Director will utilize the organizational chart to activate CERT members working primarily through District Supervisors.

- CERT members may be activated by the IRIS system, E-Mail, Amateur Radio Communications and in addition to all TV/Radio Media Stations or by phone. KTTS 94.7 FM will be the primary radio outlets for communications.
- Unless directly effected, and if possible, all responding CERT members must report to the designated staging area as instructed when activated.
- For events affecting CERT members, they will first tend to their families and adjacent neighbors. If available and wishing to respond and all safety measures have been completed, responding CERT members, and at the direction of the served agency will mobilize, assess damages, problems, and will conduct size-up for the situation while in route to the staging area.
- If a CERT member (s) is directly affected or within the hazard zone and self-deploys, then the CERT member will identify themselves to the Incident Commander or designee. The Incident Commander or designee will determine if the services of the CERT member will be needed.
- Industrial or specific business group CERT Teams will be activated for that business as determined in that business's Standard Operating Guideline.
- Team work assignments will be made as follows:
 - CERT Director will assign CERT members to specific divisions
 - Division Supervisors may make specific work assignments in the rural areas of the division or assign teams to specific teams.
 - Group Leaders will make assignments within their Team area.
- Teams will be given specific instructions on where to go or procedures to initiate to begin the response and recovery process.
- Incident Commander (IC) will be selected upon arrival from those present. The Incident Commander (IC) will provide for safety by assuring that all team members have completed CERT training, have the appropriate safety and other equipment necessary and are physically capable of performing the assigned tasks.
- Task and /or Strike Team Leaders will be assigned by the IC and will set priorities and delegate responsibility and specific assignments for each team member.
- Teams will always have a minimum of two (2) members before activating, and those teammates shall stay together until reassigned.
- Task and/or Strike Team Leaders will be responsible for team communications with the Operations Section Chief (Ops) and/or Incident Commander (IC) in charge. Incident Commander (IC) will coordinate with the Incident Command Structure and the Office of Emergency Management.
- Team members will communicate only with the Task and/or Strike Team Leader as pre-instructed using NIMS/ICS unity of command principles.
- Team Members will only perform tasks equal to their level of training, and at no time will they attempt to perform tasks beyond their scope of training and assignment directive.
- Team Leaders and members will "stand by" for further instructions after they have completed the assign tasks(s) and will wait further deployment or dismissal instructions from their Operations Section Chief.
- After dismissal from the incident, each team will return to their predetermined staging location to critique the situation. The Task and/or Strike Team Leader will, as soon as possible, contact the Operations Section Chief to convey the results of the team's critique of the deployment.

There are NO EXCEPTIONS to the above CALL OUT AND ACTIVATION SECTION. This is for the safety of the Team Members.

- Activation for other events and incidents (within Greene County service area)
 - Greene County CERT teams may be called upon for special events, such as parades, large community events, etc. The CERT teams may also be utilized to assist with crowd control, human rehab stations, lost person searches, or any other type of light duty functions that require human resources.
 - When the CERT teams are activated for these types of events, the same organizational structure and chain of command will be followed as previously outlined in these guidelines to insure accountability and safety to all members and the public.

Activation outside of Greene County

- Greene County CERT Team(s) will be activated for out-of-area response only at the direction of the Greene County Office of Emergency Management Director.
- CERT team members who are deployed outside of our community must be prepared to sustain themselves for a period of 72 hours (money, food, fuel, etc.) unless otherwise instructed by the Office of Emergency Management.
- The Office of Emergency Management will provide directions and point of contact for the deployed team(s).
- The receiving Emergency Management Director or designee is responsible for the localized deployment and accountability of the deployed team(s).
- The requesting agent will provide the following to Greene County Office of Emergency Management:
 - What skill levels they need
 - What tools the team should bring
 - When the team is needed
 - Where the team will report
 - Who the team will be under the direction of
 - How many team members are needed

EQUIPMENT

- Greene County CERT members are assigned a backpack and safety equipment. Backpacks and equipment supplied to these CERT members are the property of Greene County Office of Emergency Management.
- Unless use is authorized, Greene County CERT members are responsible for replenishing their own supplies contained within their backpacks.
- Members will use the equipment and supplies provided only for Greene County CERT training sessions and/or activations.
- Members will maintain equipment and supplies in proper working condition
- Members will report damaged equipment and supplies to the Director of Emergency Management or the CERT Director immediately.

- Equipment and supplies must be returned to Greene County OEM when a member:
 - Resigns from Greene County CERT program
 - Is physically unable to complete tasks
 - Member is removed from membership roles for rules violations.
- Equipment provided with pack will include:
 - Helmet, Gloves, Safety Vest, Safety Goggles, 4 in 1 tool or crescent wrench, flashlight w/batteries, mask.

MAINTENANCE

This Standard Operating Guideline (SOG) will be updated annually or as dictated by lessons learned from disaster events or exercises.

This plan, when used properly, can assist local government officials in accomplishing one of their primary responsibilities, which is protecting lives and property of their constituents. This plan and its provisions will become official when approved and signed below by the Springfield-Greene County Emergency Management Director and CERT Director.

Emergency Management Date
Director

CERT Director Date