

Disaster Preparedness



CERT Basic Training Unit 1

Setting the Stage



Course Preview

- Fire safety
- Disaster medical operations
- Light search and rescue
- CERT organization
- Disaster psychology
- CERT and terrorism

Unit Objectives

- Identify roles and responsibilities for community preparedness
- Describe types of hazards that affect community, people, health, and infrastructure
- Undertake personal and organizational preparedness actions
- Describe functions of CERTs

Community Preparedness: Roles and Responsibilities

- Key priority in lessening the impact of disasters
- Critical that all community members take steps to prepare
- Effective when addresses unique attributes of community and engages whole community



Government



- Government has responsibility to:
 - Develop, test, and refine emergency plans
 - Ensure emergency responders have adequate skills and resources
 - Provide services to protect and assist citizens

Emergency Operations Plan

- Assigns responsibility to organizations and individuals
- Sets forth lines of authority
- Describes how people and property will be protected
- Identifies personnel, equipment, facilities, supplies, and other resources

Community Leaders

- Have a responsibility to participate in community preparedness
 - Participate on local collaborative planning council
 - Identify and integrate appropriate resources into government plans
 - Ensure that facilities, staff, and customers served are prepared

The Public

- Learn about community alerts, warnings, and evacuation routes
- Take training
- Practice skills and personal plans
- Network and help others
- Give feedback to community
- Report suspicious activity
- Volunteer

Engaging the Whole Community

- Goal of Citizen Corps is to make communities safer, more prepared, and more resilient
- Citizen Corps Councils bring government and community leaders together
- Councils ensure emergency plans more effectively reflect the community

Types of Disaster

- Natural
- Technological
- Intentional



Key Disaster Elements

- They are relatively unexpected
- Emergency personnel may be overwhelmed
- Lives, health, and the environment are endangered



Local Hazard Vulnerability

- Identify most common disasters that occur
- Identify possible hazards with most severe impact
- Consider recent or historical impacts
- Identify susceptible locations in the community for specific hazards
- Consider what to expect from disruption of services

Results of Damage to Infrastructure

- Police: address incidences of grave public safety
- Firefighters: suppress major fires
- EMS personnel: handle life-threatening injuries
- Lower priority needs met in other ways

Hazards Related to Structure Type

- You may not have opportunity to select type of structure when a disaster occurs
- Engineered buildings have performed well in most types of disasters
- Types of damage vary by structure
- Differences in hazards and mitigation between single-family homes and multiple-unit dwellings

Hazards from Home Fixtures

- Gas line ruptures
 - Displaced water heaters or ranges
- Damage
 - From falling books, dishes, other cabinet contents
- Electric shock or injury
 - From displaced appliances, office equipment
- Fire
 - From faulty wiring, overloaded plugs, or frayed electric cords

Home and Workplace Preparedness



Preparing for a Disaster

- Know local hazards, alerts, warning systems, evacuation routes, and sheltering plans
- Consider important elements of disaster preparedness
- Address specific needs for yourself and people you know

Protective Actions

- Assess situation
- Decide to stay or change locations
 - Critical early decision in disasters
- Seek clean air and protect breathing passages
- Protect from debris and signal if trapped
- Remove contaminants
- Practice good hygiene

Sheltering



- Shelter in place: sealing a room
 - Identify internal room
 - Stay for several hours
 - Store supplies
- Shelter for extended stay
 - Stay for several days or up to 2 weeks
 - Store emergency supplies
- Mass care or community shelter
 - Take 3-day disaster kits
 - Shelters provide most supplies

Develop a Disaster Plan

- Where will you meet family members?
- Who is your out-of-State “check-in” contact?
- Will you have an extended stay? Shelter in place? Evacuate?
- How will you escape your home? Workplace? School? Place of worship?
- What route (and several alternates) will you use to evacuate your neighborhood?
- Do you have transportation?
- Did you practice your plan?



Escape Planning

- Consider needs of children and individuals with disabilities
- Inform all family members or office coworkers of the plan
- Run practice escape drills

Preparing for a Disaster

- Mitigation is the reduction of loss of life and property by lessening the impact of disasters
 - Any activity that prevents an emergency or reduces effects of hazards
- CERT members should have adequate homeowners coverage
 - Add flood insurance if in a flood hazard area

Non-structural Hazard Mitigation

- Anchor heavy furniture
- Secure appliances and office equipment
- Install hurricane storm shutters
- Childproof cabinet doors
- Locate and label gas, electricity, and water shutoffs
- Secure water heaters and have flexible gas lines installed

Other Mitigation Measures

- Bolt houses to foundations
- Install trusses or hurricane straps to reinforce roof
- Strap propane tanks and chimneys
- Strap mobile homes to their slabs
- Raise utilities
- Build a safe room

Fortifying Your Home

- Different non-structural hazards to fortify against:
 - Home fires
 - Landslides or mudslides
 - Wildfires



Get Involved



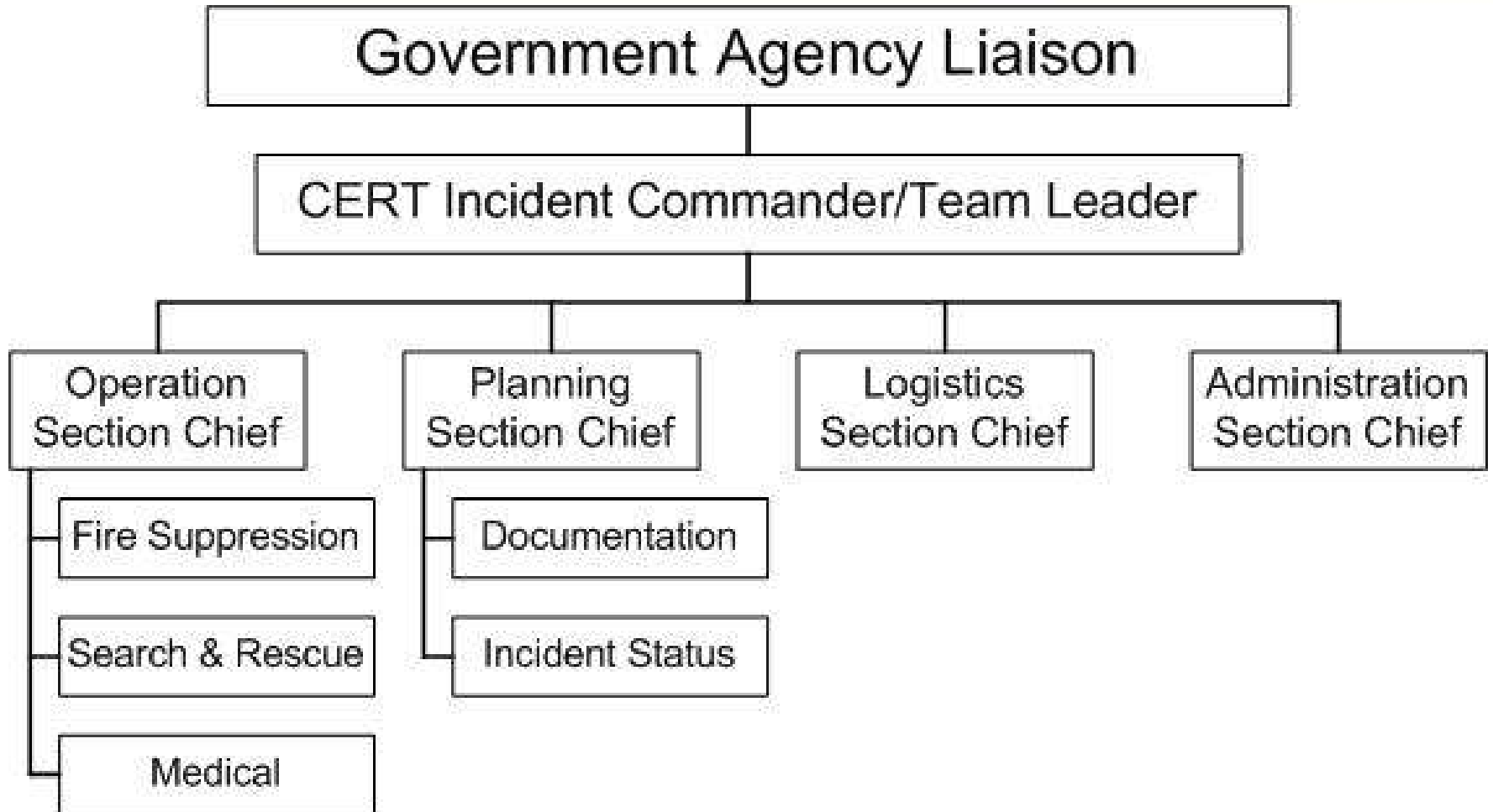
- Preparedness requires active participation from all
 - Talk to friends and family about hazards
 - Ask about emergency planning outside the home
 - Make sure those in charge have a plan
- Training provides skills needed to help others and keep skills current
 - CERT program provides training, practice, and connection to others
 - Participate in drills and exercises
 - Talk to friends and family about volunteering

CERT Disaster Response

- Respond in period immediately after a disaster
- Assist emergency response personnel when requested
- CERT members' first responsibility is personal and family safety
- Respond after a disaster:
 - Locate and turn off utilities, if safe
 - Extinguish small fires
 - Treat injuries
 - Conduct light search and rescue
 - Help to relieve survivor stress



CERT Organization



Personal Protective Equipment

- Helmet
- Goggles
- N95 Mask
- Gloves (work and non-latex)
- Sturdy shoes or work boots



CERT in Action



Non-Disaster Roles

- Identify and aid neighbors/coworkers who might need assistance
- Distribute preparedness materials; do demos
- Staff first aid booths at special events
- Assist with installation of smoke alarms
- Parade route management



Protection for Disaster Workers

- CERT members generally protected by:
 - “Good Samaritan” laws
 - Volunteer Protection Act of 1997
 - Relevant State statutes



Additional Training for CERTs

- Advanced first aid
- Animal issues in disasters
- Automated External Defibrillator (AED) use
- Community relations
- CPR skills
- Debris removal
- Donations management
- Shelter management
- Special needs concerns
- Traffic/crowd control
- Utilities control
- Online courses

Unit Summary

- You should now be able to:
 - Identify roles and responsibilities for community preparedness
 - Describe types of hazards that affect community, people, health, and infrastructure
 - Undertake personal and organizational preparedness actions
 - Describe functions of CERTs

Homework Assignment

1. Review detailed information for Unit 1
2. Read unit to be covered in next session
3. Bring necessary supplies and wear appropriate clothes for next session
4. Discuss preparedness with family and friends
5. Assemble supplies in multiple locations
6. Examine homes for hazards