



BENTON-FRANKLIN CERT

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After a disaster, first responders and other government service providers are overwhelmed. Public services cannot be delivered everywhere that help is needed. Experience has shown that in a disaster setting ordinary citizens make over 80% of successful rescues as they respond to the emergency in their community. However, many untrained volunteer rescuers may actually cause harm, or become injured in the process.

A *Community Emergency Response Team* is a ready force of organized and trained volunteer disaster workers that operates at the neighborhood level. They are prepared to be self-sustaining for three days following a large disaster.

When disaster strikes, CERT volunteers spring into action: they check on neighbors, suppress small fires, conduct light urban search and rescue, and provide emergency medical aid and psychological comfort to their neighbors.

In the post-disaster environment, CERT members organize and direct spontaneous volunteers who offer to assist in the community during the crisis. CERTs may also be called upon to help in other areas during emergencies even when their own neighborhood is not impacted.

Our Mission... is to educate citizens to be better prepared to take care of themselves, family, friends and neighbors in the event of a disaster of any type until trained emergency responders can arrive. To establish Community Emergency Response Teams as emergency management resources, volunteer pools to help during an emergency, and to perform projects that improve a community's preparedness.

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