

COMMUNITY EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM (C.E.R.T.)				
DATE ISSUED 05/26/2005	DATE EFFECTIVE 05/17/2005	DATE REVISED	REVISION NO.	PAGE 1 OF 5

Town of Bedford Police Department Community Emergency Response Team (C.E.R.T.)

Standard Operating Procedures

Proposed changes to this policy should be brought to the attention of the Chief of Police

PURPOSE

The Police Department recognizes the need to be able to incorporate and utilize volunteer help during certain emergency or disaster situations. Over the past several years, volunteer programs have been on the rise as more and more citizens have stepped forward to fill our nation's call to volunteerism. The Bedford Police Department has taken a pro-active stance in this area by training citizens to be part of a Community Emergency Response Team (CERT).

The Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Program educates people about disaster preparedness for hazards that may impact their area and trains them in basic disaster response skills, such as fire safety, light search and rescue, team organization, and disaster medical operations. Using the training learned in the classroom and during exercises, CERT members can assist others in their neighborhood or workplace following an event when professional responders are not immediately available to help. CERT members also are encouraged to support emergency response agencies by taking a more active role in emergency preparedness projects in their community.

Utilizing spontaneous or activated volunteers can supplement manpower and increase overall scene effectiveness. Therefore, the purpose of this Standard Operating Procedure is to:

To establish guidelines for utilizing CERT Volunteers during disaster and emergency situations.

To establish an understanding of the capabilities and limitations of CERT members.

To establish a procedure for injury or incident reporting, involving CERT members.

POLICY

The Chief of Police will designate a member of the Bedford Police Department to be the CERT coordinator.

The incorporation of CERT member(s) into an emergency scene or disaster situation will be at the discretion of the Chief of Police or his/her designee. Bedford Police Department personnel must directly supervise any CERT member incorporated into an emergency or disaster scene.

Only CERT members with appropriate ID can be activated.

Bedford Police Department personnel overseeing the activity of any CERT Member need to ensure that the CERT member 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.

CERT members have received basic training in the areas of disaster preparedness, fire suppression, first aid, light search and rescue, team building, and the incident management system.

PROCEDURE

1) CERT Membership

- a. Town of Bedford residents, business owners and employees may apply to be a member of the Bedford Police Department CERT.
- b. Applicants must be at least eighteen years of age to apply.
- c. Applicants must complete a Town of Bedford Police Department CERT Membership Application form.
- d. A background check of the applicant includes, but is not limited to, verification of information provided, reference checks, and NYSPIN name inquiry. The designated CERT Coordinator will conduct Application review.
- e. Applicant approval is at the sole discretion of the Chief of Police.
- f. Approved applicants, prior to training, must complete and sign a “Hold Harmless/Permission Request” agreement.
- g. When activated, CERT members are covered under the Town of Bedford Worker’s Compensation program.

2) CERT Steering Committee

- a. The Steering Committee shall consist of three trained members of the Bedford Police Department CERT program.
- b. The CERT Coordinator designated by the Chief of Police will determine who the Steering Committee members are.
- c. The Steering Committee shall elect a CERT Team Leader to help carry out the tasks and duties assigned to the CERT Coordinator.

3) CERT Training

- a. CERT training is in accordance with the Federal Emergency Management Agency guidelines.
- b. Each CERT Member trainee will receive a copy of the CERT Participant Handbook.

3) CERT Activation

- a. CERT members can be deployed for any type of major incident to include but not be limited to:
 1. Natural disasters
 2. Technological hazards
 3. Man-made or terrorist incidents
- b. CERT member activations must be approved by the Chief of Police or his/her designee.
- c. Any time a CERT member is activated, information regarding the extent of activation needs to be documented. Documentation is accomplished by including this information in the police blotter narrative (Call Type - CERT Activation).

This information should include:

- Name of CERT member
 - Assignments given and Actions taken.
 - Any outcomes, positive or negative, including injuries sustained.
- d. CERT members must comply with the requirements of CERT training, as well as complying with all federal, state and local laws when functioning as a CERT member. These requirements are established through the CERT Participant Handbook.
 - e. Once the scenario is resolved, the supervising PD member should deactivate the CERT member.

- f. CERT members are not permitted to carry or possess any weapons while undertaking activities as a CERT member.
- g. 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 while assisting the Bedford Police Department.
- h. Failure to immediately report such injury will jeopardize their ability to receive workers compensation benefits, and that any recovery for such injury is specifically and expressly limited to that available under the Town of Bedford's Workers Compensation insurance.

Acknowledgement

I hereby certify that I have read and fully understand the information presented in the Bedford Police Department Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program's Standard Operating Procedures document. Further, I acknowledge that in my decision to respond "at will" to emergency or disaster situations within the Town of Bedford, it is my duty to obey all federal, state, and local laws while functioning as a CERT member.

Further, as a CERT member, I will always use due care when I am activated. I will follow the directions of the emergency response agencies and supervisors appointed over me. In the event that I am without direction from the emergency response agencies or supervisors, I will perform my duties including making decisions as to the necessity of providing emergency services in a prudent and reasonable manner at all times.

Printed CERT member name DATE

Signature of CERT member