



In light of the increased visibility and magnitude of recent disaster events, the Holden Community Emergency Response Team (CERT), would like to introduce ourselves and our function. In the event that our community experiences a future disaster need, we wanted to let you know we are here, ready to help.

CERT is about readiness, people helping people, rescuer safety, and doing the greatest good for the greatest number. CERT is a positive and realistic approach to emergency and disaster situations where citizens will be initially on their own and their actions can make a difference. We can provide immediate assistance to victims in the area, organize spontaneous volunteers who have not had the CERT training, and collect disaster intelligence that will assist professional responders with prioritization and allocation of resources following a disaster.

Following a major disaster, first responders who provide fire and medical services will not be able to meet the demand for these services. Factors such as the number of victims, communication failures, and road blockages prevent people from accessing emergency services that they have come to expect at a moment's notice through 911. People will have to rely on each other for help in order to meet their immediate life saving and life sustaining needs.

All Holden CERT members are volunteers and are Incident Command (ICS) certified. ICS certification is not unique to CERT, but is a prerequisite to being an active responder to any disaster, at all levels.

The Community Emergency Response Team concept was developed and implemented by the Los Angeles City Fire Department (LAFD) in 1985. The Whittier Narrows earthquake in 1987 underscored the area-wide threat of a major disaster in California. Further, it confirmed the need for training civilians to meet their immediate needs. As a result, the LAFD created the Disaster Preparedness Division with the purpose of training citizens and private and government employees.

Holden CERT has identified a list of supplies to help in our goal of responding to future community disasters. If you'd like to donate supplies, make a monetary donation (checks should be made to the Town of Holden with a memo of 'CERT team account'), donate gift cards to select stores, or volunteer your time by joining the team, we'd be very appreciative.

While it is our fond hope that you will never require our services, we do want you to know that we are here to help should the need arise.

Sincerely,

Rebecca Evanoff
Holden CERT - Program Coordinator