

Citizen Corps News

Washington Commission for National & Community Service

CERT Volunteers Spend Holiday Training

It takes a special kind of person to give up a holiday weekend to willingly go to training. That would appropriately describe Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Volunteers. Trained in disaster preparedness with response capabilities in disaster medical, fire suppression, light search and rescue, cribbing (extracting trapped victims), incident command and team organization, as well as disaster psychology and terrorism awareness, CERT junkies can't get enough of this stuff.

The 2008 Expo was again held at the State Fire Training Academy in North Bend, WA. This year fell on Labor Day weekend, yet 100 people still gave their time to improve their skills and practice their decision-making in a disaster simulation.

The scenario was a moderate



CERT team, made up of volunteers from across the State, prepares to deploy on mock assignment.

earthquake that trapped victims in buildings, under rubble and created major motor vehicle pile-ups. Fires erupted across the grounds and people cried out for assistance, or wandered around in a daze. Each incident challenged the volunteers to make decisions, prioritize, effectively use resources, communicate and work as a team.

The teams also competed in a friendly relay utilizing those same skills. The day included breakfast, lunch, a shirt and a bag full of useful tools and goodies.

The feedback was all positive and everyone looks forward to next year.

"This was really fun! I appreciate the practice."

Citizen Corps Registered Programs in WA

The Citizen Corps family consists of five programs: Community Emergency Response Team (CERT), Medical Reserve Corps (MRC), USAonWatch/Neighborhood Watch (NWP), Volunteers in Police Service (VIPS) and

Fire Corps (FC).

These programs are coordinated through local, county, regional and state Citizen Corps Councils (CCC). For Washington, the following are currently registered:

- CCC - 63

- CERT - 59
- MRC - 22
- NWP - 669
- VIPS - 72
- FC - 21

Make updates at <http://www.citizencorps.gov/programs/>

Fall 2008

Citizen Corps Programs:



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Annual Commission Strategic Planning Meeting

The Staff and Commissioners from the Washington State Commission for National and Community Service met in early November for its annual strategic planning workshop.

The Commission, as appointed by the Governor, serves as the State Citizen Corps Council, and is therefore tasked with setting Citizen Corps priorities. Commissions with a Citizen Corps focus include Tami Kihns, City of Vancouver Emergency Manager ; Scott Smith, Tulalip Tribe Police Chief; Mary Mapes, Inland Northwest (Spokane) Red Cross Volunteer Services & HR; and Axel Swanson, Cowlitz County Commissioner.

Some of the priorities established for

2009 include:

- Ensuring Commissioners are personally prepared and promoting preparedness in their communities
- Continuing to work with State Ethnic Commissioners to promote preparedness among all populations
- Promoting service learning as a culminating project with a focus on preparedness
- Promoting Citizen Corps through the Washington State Emergency Managers Association conference
- Promoting Citizen Corps, preparedness and volunteerism at the April



Commissioners meet with Governor Gregoire in January 2008.

21st Mariner's game

- Expanding Volunteer Center capacity for spontaneous volunteers emerging in disasters
- Promoting service as a strategy

FFY08 Citizen Corps Allocation Released

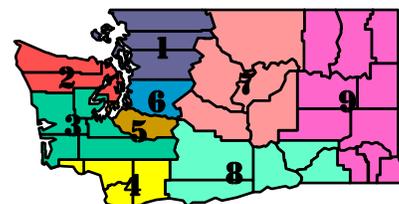
Washington State was awarded funding from the Federal Citizen Corps Program grant.

The Washington Commission for National and Community Service has been appointed by the Governor to staff the federally required Citizen Corps Coordinator position. This position performs such duties as meeting with locals and officials to establish programs, coordinate state-wide volunteer training and

report on preparedness efforts, as well as represent Washington nationally.

Each Homeland Security Region is allocated funds by a base and population percentage formula as follows:

| | |
|--------------------|--------------------|
| Region 1: \$20,542 | Region 6: \$22,846 |
| Region 2: \$18,484 | Region 7: \$18,256 |
| Region 3: \$18,783 | Region 8: \$19,029 |
| Region 4: \$18,959 | Region 9: \$19,258 |
| Region 5: \$19,715 | |



Other federal grants funds may also be used for citizen preparedness efforts.

For local information, contact your Regional Coordinator.

CERT Materials Status Update

The National CERT office assembled a group of subject matter experts to update the basic CERT materials. The materials were sent to the states for review and updated based on that feedback. The materials are in their final review from National Headquarters and are anticipated to be released "any day".

The program has not changed in its basic construct, only refinement of proce-

dures. For example, exterior search has been added to the Light Search and Rescue module.

Added to this will be optional supplemental modules, that include focuses on animals and communications, with more to be added each year.

The National CERT office is also undertaking a standardization of the train-the-trainer materials. Three pilot programs

were conducted across the country (see pg 3; CERT Train-the-Trainer Pilot in FEMA Region X), with that input being incorporated currently. The goal is to have those available by the end of the year.

If your program registration is current at <http://www.citizen corps.gov/cert/index.shtml> you will receive email notification as materials are released.



CERT Train-the-Trainer Pilot in FEMA Region X

The National CERT office is embarking on developing the first-ever standardized Train-the-Trainer materials.

When CERT was coordinated out of the Emergency Management Institute (EMI) in Emmitsburg, Maryland, the structure would depend on the given instructor. As the program was pushed out to the states, no materials were provided to support a standardized training of CERT instructors. Often the training would consist of a review of the basic CERT curriculum.

In standardizing the train-the-trainer curriculum, further guidance is given for

criteria to attend. For instance, future instructors must be endorsed by a local CERT program and/or emergency management agency. This ensures that individuals attending the class are expected to be instructors by the local program, and that the program ties into the larger emergency management structure.

For the Pilot program, it was further required that a state sponsor the class. Washington State was asked to coordinate a pilot for FEMA Region X (Washington, Oregon, Alaska and Idaho)

in conjunction with the Citizen Corps Conference (next article). 47 people



Bruce Wendt of Issaquah instructs fellow CERTs.

attended, 20 from Washington, with 4 volunteer instructors from Washington and Oregon.

The feedback

they provided will make the material a valuable tool for training quality CERT instructors.

The new material is expected out around the end of the year, and includes a focus on hands-on skill proficiency, instructor development, and practice through teach-back assignments.

Regional Citizen Corps Conference held in Portland

The Portland Urban Area hosted a Regional Citizen Corps conference in October. Attendees came from Oregon, Washington (65), Idaho, Alaska, California and Guam for the one-day event held near the Portland airport.

Conference attendees were treated to breakfast and opening remarks by Fred Bretsch, FEMA Region X Community Preparedness Program Manager before heading to the morning break-out ses-

sions. Twenty-three classes were offered throughout the day, with a break for lunch.

Members of VIPS, MRC, CERT, Fire Corps, COAD and Affiliate Programs attended this conference with the intent to begin looking at ways to exercise together, to 'cross pollinate' and to ensure collaboration. The objective of this conference was to expand core knowledge beyond each individual Citizen Corps

Program and to strengthen the bridges being built between these lifesaving programs.

Go to www.partnersinpreparedness.com for copies of conference presentations.

*Trained Volunteers
Collaborating for
Community Resiliency*

Medical Reserve Corps Partners with AmeriCorps

The Washington State Department of Health Public Health Emergency Preparedness Program (PHEPR) has partnered with the Washington Service Corps to support the placement of 10 AmeriCorps VISTA members at select Medical Reserve Corps units. AmeriCorps members started in early September 2008 and are placed at the Whatcom, Skagit, Snohomish, King, Snoqualmie / east King, Pierce, Thurston, Grays Harbor, Region 4- Southwest WA, and Region 8

Medical Reserve Corps units. The AmeriCorps VISTA members will assist the MRC program coordinator with core program activities including recruiting new volunteers, the development of MRC newsletters, planning and scheduling quarterly orientations, meetings and training events and other activities as deemed necessary by both state and local health departments. This is an exciting partnership that will help grow and sustain the MRC's.



Please contact Scott Carlson, DOH Volunteers System Manager and Washington State MRC Coordinator at scott.carlson@doh.wa.gov with questions.

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**Uniting Communities
Preparing the Nation**

A Special Word of Thanks:

I would like to take the time and space to give a special word of thanks to the people who helped to make the Expo happen this year, and for those who made it such a great event.

The Expo would not happen without the work of Children's Hospital. Dylan Hayes, Kandice Harkins and Jan Holwegner spent countless hours and tapped into unnamed resources to coordinate applications and funding, plan and test the team competition, secure meals, and all other logistical aspects. They are a phenomenal group to work with and produce fabulous results.

The staff for the Expo volunteer their time and talents to set up, clean up, and provide leadership throughout the day. They are amazing individuals that I am honored to work with.

What scenario would be complete without victims! Robin Ishem pulls together a talented group of volunteers, scripts and trains them on their conditions, and moulages their injuries. The acting ability of these folks clearly enhances the learning experience for the participants.

Thank You!

Coordinator's Corner



**Denise Mack,
Citizen Corps
Coordinator**

teers and my fellow State Coordinators and Commission Staff for their support and patience in educating me about your programs, your needs and your concerns.

2009 will be another exciting year with the anticipated national focus on service. The September 22nd issue of Time Magazine focuses on both the need for service and for personal preparedness.

This has been a very exciting year of learning for me. I want to thank all of the Regional Coordinators, Program Coordinators, First Responders, Emergency Managers, Volun-

President-Elect Obama has echoed those same priorities, so we need to be poised to meet that call.

We all know the enthusiasm and dedication that volunteers offer, and we will be challenged to find opportunities and means to keep them engaged and trained. Our jobs will be easier if we can find the way to achieve this goal, and our communities will be stronger and richer.

In the coming year I will support your efforts by:

- Offering CERT train-the-trainer classes
- Coordinating a joint CERT and MRC Expo
- Promoting the preparedness and service message

- Continuing to meet with the Program Coordinators to learn your needs

Please don't hesitate to let me know the challenges you are facing and how we can work together to resolve them.

I look forward to hearing from and working with you.

All the best in 2009,

Denise