



## **HIGHLAND PARK POLICE DEPARTMENT**

**Sergeant Joseph M. Olarra**

**222 South Fifth Avenue**

**Highland Park, N.J. 08904**

**jolarra@hpboro.com**

**Phone: 732-572-3800 X4230 Fax: 732-572-0258**

### **Highland Park Community Emergency Response Team (CERT)**

#### **ABOUT THE CERT PROGRAM**

During the 2002 State of the Union Address, President Bush asked Americans to volunteer their services in order to improve and safeguard their country. Harnessing the spirit of cooperation that developed as a result of the tragic events of September 11th, he created the Citizen Corps Program to organize volunteer services in the areas of crime, natural disasters and terrorism. The Community Emergency Response Team, or CERT, is a part of the Citizen Corps Program.

#### **CERT - THEN AND NOW**

The CERT concept dates back to 1985, when the Los Angeles Fire Department recognized that in the early stages of disaster - earthquakes in particular - local emergency responders would be overwhelmed, and basic training in disaster survival and rescue skills would improve the ability of community members to survive until responders or other assistance arrived.

Recognizing the universal value of this program, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) worked in conjunction with the LAFD to make the CERT program applicable to all types of hazards and developed a CERT training program which could be used nationwide and adapted to meet local conditions when the need arose.

The tragic events of September 11 remind us that disaster can strike anywhere or anytime, and that basic safety and disaster survival skills can mean the difference between life and death. CERT training empowers community members to prepare responsibly and respond appropriately when emergencies occur.

#### **WHAT CERT TEAMS DO**

CERT members give critical support to first responders in emergencies, provide immediate assistance to victims, organize spontaneous volunteers at a disaster site, and collect disaster intelligence to support first responders.

#### **ABOUT CERT TRAINING**

If you join CERT, you will receive basic-level training in the following areas:

Unit 1 - Disaster Preparedness

Unit 2 - Fire Safety

Unit 3 - Disaster Medical Operations - Part 1

Unit 4 - Disaster Medical Operations - Part 2

Unit 5 - Search & Rescue Operations

Unit 6 - C.E.R.T. Organization

Unit 7 - Disaster Psychology

Unit 8 - Terrorism & C.E.R.T.

Practical Exercise / Certification

Total training is usually about 18 hours, scheduled in 2-4 hour modules, over a period of weeks or months, in order to address the scheduling needs of team members. It's held in the community where you live.

Training courses, student materials and equipment are provided free of charge.

#### ROLE OF CERTs IN AN EMERGENCY

CERTs have been used to:

- Search for lost or kidnapped children

- Staff Emergency Operations Centers and monitor events

- Emergency Operations Center security; driving, information, assisting disabled visitors and minor first aid
- Manage "spontaneous/convergent" volunteers

- Assist Red Cross and other relief organization on mass care

#### HOW CAN I JOIN?

To become a CERT member you must be at least 18 years of age and possess a valid driver's license.

If you want to volunteer your services and become trained to protect yourself and families from disaster; natural or man-made...

Become a CERT member!