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CERT ALERT

WELCOME

Welcome to the first edition of the CERT Alert for 2018. In this issue we highlight how we ended 2017 and entered 2018 running full steam ahead. Our first CERT class of the year just graduated this past weekend, a preparedness workshop was held for the residents of Tillicum and Woodbrook, and our January quarterly training focused on active shooter response. Our work does not stop, there are a number of future trainings and events requiring volunteers. Be sure to mark your calendar as 2018 will be a busy and exciting year!



HOLIDAY POTLUCK

West Pierce CERT ended 2017 on a high note with our annual holiday potluck. WP CERT members came together to share fun, food and games. We had three tables filled with an assortment of great dishes and desserts! Karen Kolley's corn casserole was a hit!

Always striving to improve, we took the opportunity to refresh our CERT knowledge with a friendly game of CERT Jeopardy! We discovered that a review of the CERT Sizeup was in order.

CERT Sizeup

1. Gather Facts
2. Assess Damage
3. Consider Probabilities
4. Assess Your Situation
5. Establish Priorities
6. Make Decisions
7. Develop a Plan of Action
8. Take Action
9. Evaluate Progress



We also had a friendly debate about kitchen fire safety. A K fire extinguisher is for commercial kitchens. An A,B,C fire extinguisher will work for home kitchen fires.

We awarded our CERT members who contributed the most volunteer hours for 2017!

- Nate Hart – 43.75 volunteer hours
- Anne Gardner – 41 volunteer hours
- Jim Hewitt – 43.5 volunteer hours
- Brianna Godfrey – 39.5 volunteer hours

Even our Fire Chief, Jim Sharp, made a cameo appearance! And Santa CERTified, ugly sweaters were everywhere to be seen.

All attendees went home with a Christmas goodie bag filled with items to add to their emergency preparedness kit.



CERT 36

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West Pierce CERT held the first class of 2018, CERT 36, in February-March. Eighteen local citizens have joined the ranks of those who are now trained in basic disaster response skills to assist themselves, their family, and their neighbors before, during, and after a major emergency. Attendees of this class came with skills that will be of use in disaster response. We had attendees with prior military and military medical experience, construction experience, medical laboratory experience, law enforcement backgrounds, animal rescue, working with those with disabilities and family members of firefighters. Instructors had class members teach in their areas of expertise. Firefighter/Paramedic Jeff Colquhoun, one of the original West Pierce CERT instructors, even came back to assist with teaching fire safety.



Some key points learned by CERT 36 were:

- Consider construction of damaged buildings. How will damage affect these different types of construction?
- Structures made of wood will often “talk” when under stress by creaking and making other noise when danger is eminent. Listen and stay safe
- Do your detective work, aka. 360°
- The importance of proper opening of a door. First check for heat. If no evidence of fire behind the door, keep control on the door and open it slowly while your buddy looks in, make sure you both are out of the way in case people, dogs, etc., exit immediately upon opening of the door.
- The importance of communication and positive communication
- The IC must be confident in command and quickly establish a command post and action plan
- Learn from past responses to improve future ones
- Voice triage, “If you can hear me, come to the sound of my voice.”
- The necessity to use a systematic approach in all CERT operations
- Utility management and the importance of L.I.E.S and detectors
- How to extinguish small fires
- With a three person team, have one person stay back at the door to gauge the bigger picture while the other two perform a room sweep
- Slow is smooth and smooth is fast.



CERT 36



Excellent program, excellent instructors. If even one person on every block took this training, our community would be a thousand times more prepared to handle a crisis than we are right now. Even if only for your own family's sake, check it out!



– Chris Bailey, CERT 36



Awesome course, great instructors, great people, fun learning environment!

– Gregory Hill, CERT 36



WELCOME TO OUR NEWEST GRADUATES, CERT 36!



CERT 3 – October 2009

Marilyn Snider



CERT has taught me more about myself than I ever knew. I am a 45 year survivor of a traumatic brain injury. I joined CERT at the prompting of my apartment manager, Joanne Hatch, who took the training and

wanted to start of team in our area. I am a Washington native who has lived in Woodbrook for 18 years. Woodbrook is a transient neighborhood with many disabled and senior residents. I like to help people and know that many people in my area would need help following a major disaster. I asked Joanne if she thought I would be able to handle the training, she said yes, and the rest is history. When I totally freaked out on drill day, Collen Adler, who ran the program at that time, told me to focus on my strengths as opposed to my limitations. I realized that I am great at comforting others and helping others learn. My service animal, Shorty, who has been with me for 28 years, has comforted me through many trying times and although he can no longer oink a full chorus of jingle bells he can help comfort others as well.

I participate in every CERT event I can to help others learn. My favorite CERT memory is one of the first times I was a volunteer victim for a drill. My scenario was that I had just given birth after an earthquake. Another CERT volunteer victim played the role of my mother who had just suffered a heart attack. My newborn baby and I were tagged during triage and evacuated from the building while grandma was totally forgotten about. I just laugh every time I think about that memory. I consider CERT my job and spread the word about its benefits any time I can. West Pierce CERT is the best disaster preparedness program around.



Nancy Bush

Having grown up in Southern California, earthquakes were a daily occurrence. I took the West Pierce CERT program to better assistance those around me following a disaster.

My favorite CERT memory was being activated for assistance with crowd control during the procession for the



four fallen Lakewood police officers; the first activation ever for West Pierce CERT. I knew two of the fallen officers and desired to help in any way I could. It was so quiet during the event you could hear a pin drop and there were lots of tears. Our involvement was critical and our assistance and hospitality were unparalleled.

My training has also resulted in better preparation in the event of a disaster for the Lakewood middle school where I work and serve on safety committee. Being a CERT member is an ongoing process of learning, growth and development, not a one and done event.

I spend my free time working in my yard with a few of my neighbors, playing with my two dogs, and looking forward to retirement in the next few years.

JANUARY QUARTERLY TRAINING

– Active Shooter

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Pierce County Sheriff Deputy Dan Hacker returned for a repeat of the Quarterly Training topic given last January. This Active Shooter training was highly anticipated, timely and well received. Deputy Hacker presented to a packed audience. Last year, 32 volunteers attended the training. This year, we had 47 volunteer attendees with 22 volunteers on a waitlist due to room capacity.



Deputy Hacker's presentation focused on ways to identify and respond to a verbally aggressive individual, a physically assaultive individual, and ended with response to an active shooter. A key point made by Deputy Hacker was the importance of how far respect can go toward diffusing a situation. Verbally and physically aggressive individuals and active shooters often act out of the sense that they were disrespected. These individuals can be strangers, customers, co-workers or personal relations. Remember, "Bears are everywhere."



The importance of listening and non-verbal communication was emphasized. The majority of how an individual interprets what you are saying is by the way you speak and your actions while speaking as opposed to what you actually say. Remember, "At the end of the day people won't remember what you said or did, they will remember how you made them feel", Maya Angelou.

Deputy Hacker discussed the topic of reasonable force by posing the following question, "If an aggressor is punching you in the stomach, is it reasonable to punch them back?" The class agreed that this response would be within reason. Deputy Hacker then asked if this response would still be reasonable force if the aggressor was a five year old girl. "You better check yourself before you wreck yourself". Remember to counter with reasonable force.

Take home points in how to respond to an active shooter

- **RUN!** – Engage in situational awareness. Have an escape plan and escape phrase ready.
- **HIDE!** – Be aware of your location and note locations of lockable rooms and items that can be used as cover.
- **FIGHT!** – Change the things you can to be more prepared. Keep in good health and take additional training to be better equipped to respond if needed. Take notice of objects you could use as a weapon if needed. Visualize what you may need to do in response to an active shooter. You have to be ready to fight back and not be afraid to do so when required. A law abiding citizen trained in firearm use can assist in the event of an active shooter.



It is not selfish to look out for #1. Many people need and want you to live!

Tillicum Preparedness Workshop

February 6, 2018

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First responders will be overwhelmed following a major disaster. Local citizens will need to rely on themselves, their family members and their neighbors for life-saving and life-sustaining needs in the immediate aftermath. CERT training teaches citizens basic disaster response skills. CERT training requires a commitment of time that is not doable for all citizens. The American Lake/Tillicum



Community Center hosted the Tillicum Preparedness Workshop on February 6th. Habitat for Humanity and West Pierce CERT partnered to provide basic preparation education to the residents of Tillicum and Woodbrook. Both of these communities have a low income and transient population. In addition, Tillicum only has two routes of entry and exit, both freeway overpasses, potentially isolating residents from outside resources and support following a major disaster. The workshop hosted representatives from West Pierce Fire & Rescue (WPFR), Puget Sound Energy (PSE), and the Lakewood Police Department who educated attendees on household fire safety, utility management, developing a household emergency plan, building a preparedness kit and MyLakewood311 to help them better prepare for an emergency or disaster.



Javier Unda from Habitat for Humanity began the night with an interactive discussion defining disaster and the role local citizens would play following a disaster. Battalion Chief Scott Adams from WPFR started out the night with the recommendation that every house have at least one fire extinguisher and ensure it is serviced at least once a year. He reviewed the P.A.S.S (Pull, Aim, Squeeze, Sweep) method for fire extinguisher use and reminded attendees to have an escape route planned prior to attempting to extinguish small fires only. He also recommended that every home have the proper number of smoke alarms and a carbon monoxide monitor equipped with

working batteries. WPFR currently offers free smoke alarms and carbon monoxide monitor installation via a federally funded grant. BC Adams encouraged attendees to take advantage of this service by calling 253.564.1623.

PSE discussed utility management and natural gas safety. They had a demonstration gas meter on hand and explained how natural gas enters the meter from underground pipes at a rate of 40 pounds per square inch which decreased to $\frac{1}{4}$ pound per square inch once it reaches the regulator on the top of the meter. (If a leak occurs anywhere between the ground and the regulator a loud hissing sound will be heard and the odor of rotten eggs will be apparent.) Scratch and sniff pamphlets were provided to ensure everyone, particularly children, know the smell of natural gas. While a ruptured gas line by itself will not cause a fire or explosion, if natural gas comes in contact with an ignition source such as a spark from ringing a doorbell or flipping a light switch. This is why attendees were advised to vacate the premises immediately and call 911 if they smell natural gas. PSE demonstrated how to turn off a gas meter and stressed that it must be the company who turns the gas back on. This allows them to confirm that lines are not damaged and gas powered utilities are functioning properly to ensure that it is safe for you to return home.



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Tillicum Preparedness Workshop, *cont*

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PSE also focused on electrical safety. Attendees were asked what the longest duration was that they have ever gone without power. Eight days was the winner. Attendees were assured that PSE is doing all in their power to restore it power as quickly as possible when an outage occurs. Electricity travels through progressively decreasing levels to get to your house. Damage assessment can take up to 24 hours and repairs must be done at the first level damaged before working on others. Extra crews from out-of-state may also be needed to assist with larger jobs. PSE invited attendees to download the free PSE app to report power outages and track time estimates for restoration. PSE also discussed the danger of downed power lines. Don't be a chainsaw hero. If you see downed power lines, report them. Do not attempt to moves trees or other items from around downed power lines. If you are in your car and a power line goes down near you stay in your car and call 911. PSE taught attendees how to exit the vehicle safely if it is absolutely necessary.



Rachel Adler from West Pierce CERT discussed the importance of having a household emergency plan and preparedness kit. Points of focus were the need to designate an out-of-area contact and two family meeting locations. A long distance phone call to an out-of-area contact, someone who lives at least one hundred miles away, is more likely to get through than a local phone call following a disaster. Texting is best. Designation of two meeting family locations, one outside the house and one outside the neighborhood, ensures accountability of all family members following an emergency or disaster. Building a preparedness kit ensures that your family has the essentials for survival. FEMA's current recommendation is that families build a two week preparedness kit. This can seem like an overwhelming task, yet it can be done over time and with minimal expense by collecting items from around your home and/or purchasing them at a dollar store. Ms. Adler brought in a demo 72-hour kit for a family of four, the majority of which had been purchased at a dollar store. She also discussed the need to include forms of identity, insurance policies, medical information and comfort items. Important documents will be required to obtain financial assistance and filling insurance claims following a disaster. Comfort items such as candy, crayons, coloring books, playing cards and games can help bring a sense of normalcy during a chaotic time. Having current pictures of family members and pets also helps bring a sense of comfort and can assist with reunification if any of these members of the family are missing. Preparation in this way helps instill confidence and reduce family member anxiety.

Gail Connelly from the Lakewood Police Department discussed their free app, MyLakewood311. This app allows citizens to anonymously report and track issues ranging from litter to broken street lights or potholes to the city. Protection against identity theft was also discussed.

cont.



Tillicum Preparedness Workshop, *cont*

Workshop participants received a free backpack filled with disaster preparedness items at the end of the evening in addition to some attendees winning raffle prizes of first aid kits, life straws or a solar/hand crank flashlight/radio.

Individual and community involvement is critical as it will be the local residents who act as first responders immediately following an emergency or disaster. The presenters encouraged attendees to make preparedness a fun event by involving kids in home scavenger hunts for potential hazards, shopping sprees for disaster preparedness kit items, and by drawing and practicing their household emergency plan. The importance of community was emphasized with a map project where attendees marked where they lived, their family meeting locations, and the locations of neighbors who may require extra assistance on maps of Tillicum and Woodbrook.



Sharing knowledge with others enhances everyone's preparedness. The goal is to now expand the knowledge learned to individual neighborhoods in the community via the Map Your Neighborhood program. Luckily, expansion of knowledge has already begun as a local cub scout, Evan Testerman of Pack 318 in Federal Way, WA, in attendance that evening already shared the information he learned with his den, prompting preparedness in his community. That's what this evening was all about.



- **Emergency Preparedness Presentation**

Wednesday, March 7, 2018, 6:00pm to 8:00pm

Station 31, 3631 Drexler Dr W, University Place, WA

Pierce County Sheriff Deputy Dan Hacker will be presenting on personal emergency preparedness. This event is open to the community.

Class is FULL.

**Ready for an
Emergency?**
You can be.



- **Disaster Preparedness Presentation**

Tuesday, March 27, 2018, 6:30pm to 7:30pm

Lakewood Public Library, 6300 Wildaire Rd SW, Lakewood, WA 98499

Please save this information with others in your community. This event is to increase awareness to get more local citizens involved with West Pierce CERT. **Please RSVP by March 20, 2018.**

- **Health Department Exercise**

Volunteers are needed to act as residents for a mass medication/vaccination exercise drill.

Wednesday, April 11, 2018, 5:00pm to 8:00pm

Washington High School, 12420 Ainsworth Ave S, Tacoma, WA 98444

Please sign up here: www.SignUpGenius.com/go/60B0C4AA4AB23A7FD0-fullscale

This event will also take place on June 26th and August 9th. Stay tuned for more information about these dates!

- **Disaster Preparedness Day**

Saturday, April 21, 2018, 10:00am to 2:00pm

Lakewood Family YMCA, 9715 Lakewood Dr. SW, Lakewood, WA. **Free to the public.**

Volunteers are needed for this event. **Please RSVP by April 11, 2018.**

- **Quarterly Training**

Rope Training

Wednesday, April 25, 2018, 6:30pm to 8:30pm

Location to be determined. **Please RSVP by April 11, 2018.**



MARK YOUR CALENDAR

- **CERT 37**

April 17 – May 5, 2018

Tuesday and Thursday evenings at **Station 21**, 5000 Steilacoom Blvd, SW, Lakewood, WA.



Volunteer victims are needed for drill day, May 5, 2018. This is a great way to learn more from a different perspective!

CERT 35 Drill Day Volunteer Victims



CERT 36 Drill Day Volunteer Victims



Current CERT members may audit any of the upcoming CERT classes. Volunteer **You must inform Valerie or Rachel** if you desire to audit a class or be a volunteer victim. This is for everyone's safety and to assist in tracking of volunteer hours.

All RSVPs should go through **Valerie Marmolejo** ***EXCEPT*** for the Health Department Exercise.

CHECK US OUT!

Let's be Friends...on Facebook!



Facebook is a great way to get updated CERT information, pictures, trainings and of course emergency information. If you have liked the West Pierce CERT page but are not seeing any of our posts, you can change that right now! Go to our Facebook page:

www.facebook.com/westpiercert/

Under the cover page, you will see:



Hover over "following" and click on "first" instead of "default". This will tell Facebook that you want to see West Pierce CERT posts and you should start to see all the great things our program is doing!

Prepare in a Year

Help out your family and friends by sharing our "Prepare in a Year" posts at:

www.westpier.org/cert/prepare-in-a-year/

Each month we will focus on one task to help with cost effective preparedness.

Check out and SHARE the page!



VALERIE MARMOLEJO
AMERICORPS/CERT COORDINATOR
253-983-4580 | 253-582-7912 fax
VALERIE.MARMOLEJO@WESTPIERCE.ORG

RACHEL ADLER
EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS COORDINATOR
| 253-983-4564 | 253-582-7912 fax |
RACHEL.ADLER@WESTPIERCE.ORG