



CERT Alert!



Winter 2024 Newsletter

RECENT WEST PIERCE CERT EVENTS

Supporting Bereaved Youth

On November 15th, 2023, Maureen Gulczynski(LMHC, Safe Crossing Program Pierce County Pediatric Grief Counselor and CERT 49) and Makenzie Muilenburg (MS, LMHC, Safe Crossing Program Coordinator & Grief Counselor) presented “Supporting Bereaved Youth, Providence Hospice of Seattle’s Safe Crossing Program,” to our CERT members. The Safe Crossings Program serves any grieving child or teen seeking support in King and Pierce County. Maureen and Makenzie presented for 2 hours on how to talk to children about illness and death, different grief reactions and developmental considerations, acute loss along with traumatic and secondary losses, cultural considerations, and Dos and Don’ts when talking to adolescents about loss. So much incredible information was shared, and great questions were answered with expertise.

Below are a few resources provided:

- [NACG | Awareness | Children's Grief Awareness](#)
- [Mental Health First Aid](#)
- [Kids Mental Health Pierce County – Linking arms to improve children’s mental health in Pierce](#)

Pierce County CERT Programs- Shelter Training

West Pierce CERT members participated in a CERT shelter training on November 29th at the Tacoma Fire training facility. During this session, they divided into teams to strategize shelter team organization, devise a shelter layout, and deliberate over critical initial considerations for shelter operations. This training is one of many to come with the goal of supporting our partners and neighboring jurisdictions should the need for shelter volunteers arise.



RECENT WEST PIERCE CERT EVENTS CONTINUED...

CERT Holiday Gathering

On December 6th, members from West Pierce CERT gathered at Station 20 to celebrate the holidays. As we dined on tacos and taquitos, we played CERT jeopardy and many prizes were won. This was a small token of gratitude from WPFR to you for showing up, engaging, and being a beacon of support in our community.



Sandbag Fill

With expected high coastal flooding for Mid-December, The City of University Place asked CERT for assistance in filling sandbags for residents of Day Island. On December 8th, seven CERT members arrived at Cirque Park to help fill, tie, and load 150 sandbags.

Thank you Bryce (CERT 49), Christina (CERT 48) Anne (CERT 26), Sue (36), and George (CERT 26) for braving the elements and working together to protect property!



12 Cs for Survival- Oct 2023 CERT Quarterly Training

Our moulage artist, Kevin Ransier taught his "12 Cs for Survival" class on October 25, 2023.

The "C" represents categories of items one should have when backpacking. However, these items translate to basic emergency preparedness. This list is for packing the essentials and keeping your pack as light and purposeful as possible.

1. **Container-** Your backpack or duffle bag is your first container, but be sure to pack an item that can hold water. The number one suggestion is a single-wall metal water bottle. It can be used to boil water, cook food, and store other items collected for survival. Kevin note: Stashing a couple of gallon Ziploc bags is a good idea. Garbage bags have dozens of uses, one of which is to protect your backpack from the elements.

2. **Cordage-** 550 Paracord (550 LBs breaking load) is suggested. There are many uses for paracord when backpacking: tying up your food from animals, stringing up your shelter, fishing line, simple snare, rescue line, splinting, and the list goes on. Kevin note: Search the natural environment for tree roots or vines that can be used in a pinch.

3. **Cover-** Something to keep you warm and dry. Whether it's a tarp, poncho, tent, blanket, or sleep pad, this item needs to be versatile. Consider the weight and uses of the "cover category" when packing. Kevin note: 6 mil drum liners or contractor bags are a great resource.



4. **Cutting Tool-** A folding saw is excellent for collecting firewood and getting fine shavings as kindling. A full-tang knife (the tang extends the entire length of the grip portion of the handle), multi-tool, and/or a Swiss army knife are great for this category.

5. **Combustion-** Essential resources for warmth and cooking. Bic lighters, storm-matches, flares (distress signal and fire starter), and Ferro rods are all good options to pack. Alcohol wipes and hand sanitizer in your first aid kit will also assist you in this category. Kevin note: Fatwood is a great fire starter and can be found in the forests. Typically found in an old pine stump, it has a high concentration of natural resin. When looking for fatwood, look for a stump with spires still standing or whole. Rotting stumps have had plenty of time for the resin to collect in the stump.





6. Comms- While a fully charged phone with a backup battery and a radio are crucial when backpacking, having other means of communication is just as critical. A Whistle is a vital tool to always carry. An orange tarp (Cover category) and bandana (Cotton category) can signal for help or track your route. Bright color contractor tape can also be used to mark your trail. Purchasing a Zoleo or GPS with Sat. messaging is an excellent investment for those avid backpackers.

7. Candles- A headlamp, flashlight, extra batteries, and candles to provide light. A headlamp is the best option, allowing you to be hands-free.

8. Compass- Carry a compass (and know how to use it!) when backpacking. A map is also an excellent tool. Pack a weather-resistant notebook to make notes and drawings of your surroundings.

9. Cotton- You may have heard the term "cotton kills" when backpacking or hiking, which refers to wearing the fabric. It doesn't wick the moisture away from your skin; when cotton gets wet, it ceases to insulate. However, cotton has other uses. Bright cotton bandanas can signal for help, be used as a fire starter, filter water, and the medical uses are plenty. Cotton balls are lightweight for your pack and also have many uses.

10. Cargo Tape- We love Duct Tape in CERT! The number of uses for this versatile product are endless. This is a must-have item for medical uses, repairing tools, and creating containers. Kevin note: Gorilla tape can be used as kindling. Rip thin strings of the tape and crumple them into a loose ball; it will light quickly and assist in your fire starting.



11. Care/Comfort- First aid, medications, hygiene, and bug spray/sunscreen all fall under the "care category." Kevin note: instant coffee can provide much comfort in a survival situation!

12. Calories- Freeze-dried meals, snack bars, oatmeal, and retort meals (think Hormel's, ready to eat) are great options. Choose things that are lightweight and have a high-calorie count but minimal effort.

This list covers only some of your needs for some situations. These 12 categories are to get your mind thinking about what you need to survive. Here is Kevin's Emergency/Survival Backpack list with suggested brands and quantities.

Emergency/Survival Backpack

Bandana, 22", white	1 ea
Bandana, 22", orange	1 ea
Compass, MCB, Suunto	1 ea
Cook set, bottle, stainless steel, 32oz, Self Reliance Outfitters	1 ea
Daypack, 40 L, Maelstrom	1 ea
Fatwood	3 ea
Filter, water, squeeze Sawyer (system)	1 ea
Hanger, bottle, Self Reliance Outfitters	1 ea
Kit, cook (stove & fuel) [MallowMe Stove & Iso-butane fuel]	1 ea
Kit, fire (cotton balls, ferro rod, Uco fire starters, Bic lighter)	1 ea
Kit, first aid, personal plus, Rescue Essentials	1 ea
Knife, Companion, Morakniv	1 ea
Light, flash, 90 lumen, Olight , AAA (w/battery)	1 ea
Light, head, AAA, Energizer (w/batteries) [350 lumens]	1 ea
Lighter, Bic (spare)	1 ea
Map, Kitsap County, GM Johnson	1 ea
Opener, can, P-51	1 ea
Paracord. 550, 100', Atwood	1 ea
Peg, tent, ABS, 6", Coghlan's	2 ea
Poncho, Arcturus , orange	1 ea
Rations, lifeboat, SOS	1 ea
Sanitizer, hand, 2 oz.	2 ea
Saw, folding, Bahco Laplander	1 ea
Stabilizer, can, fuel, jetboil	1 ea
Tablet, purification, water, Katadyn	10 ea
Tape, duck, Gorilla , 1"	1 ea
Tarp, blanket, emergency, Arcturus , orange	1 ea
Tissue, toilet, Tissue On The Go, Coghlan's	2 ea
Water, 16 oz	2 ea
Bag, duffle, black, 75L, Rothco	1 ea
Meals, freeze dried, Mountain House Adventure	8 ea
Pad, sleeping, foam, .5 x 24 x 72, Wakeman	1 ea
Tarp, 12x16, silver/black, Core	1ea

Tarp, 5x7, blue Sigman	1 ea
Tent, yellow, 2 person, Geertop	1 ea

Suggested items for adding to you kit

Bag, sleeping	1 ea
Bag, water, Vecto, Cnoc , 2 liter (for use with Sawyer filter)	1 ea
Bank, battery	1 ea
Battery, AAA, spare	1 ea
Cash (in different denominations)	4 ea
Eyeglasses (is used)	???
Food: protein bars, candy bars, oatmeal, etc.	1 ea
Fuel, isobutane (additional for stove)	???
Gloves, work, leather	1 ea
Hat, beanie	1 ea
Kit, Hygiene	1 ea
Kit, notebook: notebook, pen, pencil, & Sharpie	1 ea
Marker, sharpie	1 ea
Meds, 70day supply (pain relievers, personal meds)	1 ea
Pants, synthetic	???
Repellent, bug, 2oz	1 ea
Shirt, synthetic	???
Soap, multi-purpose (Dr. Bronner's, Campsuds , etc.)	1 ea
Socks, wool	2 pr
Spoon or fork	1 ea
Stone, sharpening knife, 4"x1", 600 grit or fine	1 ea
Tool, multi	1 ea
Underwear, synthetic	2 ea
Vitamins, multi	???
Warmer, hand, chemical	2 pr
Whistle	1 ea
Wipes, Wet-Ones or equivalent	Pkg.
Zoleo, Bivy Stick , or Garmin type satellite messaging device	

January CERT Quarterly Training

Phonetic Alphabet

A - alpha	N - november
B - bravo	O - oscar
C - charlie	P - papa
D - delta	Q - quebec
E - echo	R - romeo
F - foxtrot	S - sierra
G - golf	T - tango
H - hotel	U - uniform
I - india	V - victor
J - juliet	W - whiskey
K - kilo	X - x-ray
L - lima	Y - yankee
M - mike	Z - zulu

Radios 101 was the topic of the January 24th QT. Stan Nelson and Garrett Pessemier (CERT 29) with Pierce County ARES went over the importance of radios in emergency communications and the different types of radios and radio licenses. We reviewed FRS/GMRS frequencies, simplex, and repeaters.

If you are interested in obtaining your amateur radio license (ham), check out the Radio Club of Tacoma at W7DK.org. They hold classes multiple times a year (\$10 class fee, \$30 for the manual). If you have your Ham radio license and want to support Pierce County Emergency Management, visit PierceCountyARES.net.

Aidan Rotondo-AmeriCorps no more...

Aidan Rotondo is no longer the AmeriCorps/ Citizen Preparedness Coordinator because.....He was offered a Firefighter position at West Pierce! Aidan took the test back in spring of 2023 and made the list. With all the hiring happening, Aidan's number came up on 1/31 with 48 hour notice to start Academy on 2/2. We are so excited for Aidan and this career/life changing moment.

The AmeriCorps position is vacant until further notice. Please contact Rachel.Adler@westpierce regarding all CERT business.



Member Highlight

George Spence recently celebrated his 80th birthday! George has been a West Pierce CERT member for nine years, graduating with CERT Class 26 in 2015. He has volunteered over 130 hours, from loading pumpkins for Fall Safety Day, restocking at EFN, and cleaning our adopted street to participating in countless training and drills. George shows up with a smile on his face to assist our community in whatever is needed. George is not only a CERT legend but a national hero.

George attended college in North Carolina as a cadet in the US Army ROTC, graduating in 1966 during the Jim Crow Law era. George's first duty station was in Fairbanks, AK, where he was offered flight school, which he completed in Texas. His 1st tour out of flight school was flying Huey helicopters in Vietnam. He volunteered for a 2nd tour, but the US Army had other plans for him. He was assigned to Fort Leonard Wood in Missouri, where he transitioned to Chinooks. George retired from the army as a Lt. Colonel in the early '80s. George's friend Mike, a retired US Navy Crew Chief, shared that George completed several "hairy" rescues for which he should have received commendations. Hero.

George went on to work for Pacific NW Bell for about 15 years and then Peirce Transit before retiring for good. He volunteered for a civilian organization supporting US military Reservists before becoming a CERT volunteer.



Bell UH-1 Iroquois (Huey) Photo credit: War History Online



Upcoming CERT Trainings & Events..

March 23, 2024-CERT 50 Role Player

If you would like to be a role player on March 23rd for the CERT 50 drill, please email Rachel.Adler@westpierce.org. We ask that that role players arrive around 9:30 AM. You should expect to be on the drill ground from 11:00 AM- 1:00 PM. Lunch will be provided.

EFN Repack

- Friday, March 15th from 12-2:30
- Saturday, April 13th from 12-2:30

Please email Rachel.Adler@westpierce.org to sign up!

Repack Project volunteers transform bulk food shipments into family-sized portions that are ready to help feed the community! Once repackaged, the food is ready to go out to the 75+ Pierce County food pantries, meal sites, and shelters that EFN serve.

May 4, 2024- Join West Pierce CERT's EFN Hunger Walk Team!

Last year, the West Pierce CERT team raised \$770 for Emergency Food Network. EFN distributes to 75 food pantries, meal sites, and shelter in Pierce County. Every dollar helps EFN distribute more than a million pounds of food each month. This year's walk will be on Saturday, May 4th at Fort Steilacoom Park. Early registration of \$15 is available now through February 27th.

<https://runsignup.com/RaceGroups/69925/Groups/1467114>



Adopt-a-Street cleanup

Saturday, March 30th from 10-12PM

We will clean our stretch of street from 87th Ave to Farwest Dr on Steilacoom Blvd.

Please email Rachel.Adler@westpierce.org to sign up!

Spring CERT Quarterly Training

Fire for Survival

April 24th from 5:30-7:30PM at Station 21

Learn basic ways to make fire with natural materials and how to use a ferro rod and striker. Registration required, email

Rachel.Adler@westpierce.org

Free online Flood cleanup Awareness Training

With all the flooding California just experienced, we thought it would be a good idea for CERT to be familiar with flood cleanup and the hazards associated with the clean up process. This 1-hour class summarizes the various hazards and is a good starting point for future trainings. If you take the course, please email Rachel your certificate for credit.

<https://www.safetyunlimited.com/online-courses/Flood-Cleanup-Awareness-Online.asp>

Upcoming Pierce County Trainings

Mass Care and Sheltering- Basic

This training will include an overview of Mass Care, types of sheltering, legal requirements and the roles and responsibilities of a DEM volunteer. This is the pre-requisite to the Advanced course offering.

- Date: Thursday, February 22, 2024

Register here- <http://tinyurl.com/57uuk4sp>

- Audience: Anyone 18+, HOAs, neighborhood and community groups

Mass Care and Sheltering- Advanced

This training will include how to setup a shelter, identify mass care equipment, shelter forms and documentation as well as additional training opportunities. It is preferred all attendees have taken the Basic Course prior to the advanced offering.

- Date: Thursday, March 21, 2024

Register here- <http://tinyurl.com/3e66cd9b>

- Audience: Anyone 18+, HOAs, neighborhood and community groups

Radio Communication 101- Basic

In this training, you will learn the fundamentals of basic emergency communication and gain hands-on experience.

- Date: Thursday, March 7, 2024

Register here- <http://tinyurl.com/mr3me7pu>

- Audience: Anyone 18+, HOAs, neighborhood and community groups
- Run Time: 2 hours
- Cost: Free

Radio Communications 201- Advanced

In this training, you will build on your basic emergency communication knowledge and dive deeper into the *intricacies* of GMRS, Antenna, Frequencies and tones, Simplex and Repeater Operations. Preferred that all attendees have taken the Basic Course prior to the advanced offering.

- Date: Thursday, March 14, 2024

Register here- <http://tinyurl.com/3fck4j47>

- Audience: Anyone 18+, HOAs, neighborhood and community groups
- Run Time: 2 hours
- Cost: Free