



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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**OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT TO KICK OFF NEW  
ROUND OF COMMUNITY EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM TRAINING**

*CERT Program Continues To Expand By Training 153 New Volunteers*

The New York City Office of Emergency Management will begin the latest round of Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training with classes in each of the five boroughs today. The 153 new volunteers will undergo a 10-week training program in disaster preparedness and basic emergency response. The CERT program now has more than 1,100 active volunteers that make up the 56 teams throughout the five boroughs.

“Today, I am pleased to welcome more than 150 New Yorkers to one of the greatest volunteer opportunities in the city,” said OEM Commissioner Joseph F. Bruno. “By joining the CERT program, you are not only answering Mayor Bloomberg’s call to engage in public service through volunteerism, you are also making your communities safer and better prepared, and I commend you for your service.”

The new CERT volunteers will be taught through a combination of classroom and hands-on sessions by active and retired elite personnel from the Police and Fire Departments. After completing training that includes fire safety, search and rescue, and disaster medical operations, the CERTs will work to support City agencies that prepare for and respond to emergencies. CERT volunteers also work to educate their communities about emergency preparedness through OEM’s Ready New York campaign.

Over the past two years, CERT volunteers have been deployed to assist first responders at fires, power outages, warming centers, construction accidents, and series of special events, including the Macy’s Thanksgiving Day parade. Last year, CERT volunteers also helped OEM and the Department of Environmental Protection locate the mysterious maple syrup odor reported in Manhattan, the Bronx, and Queens by reporting the locations where the odor could be detected.

Most recently, CERTs are playing an important role at the Haiti Earthquake Family Resource Center in Crown Heights, Brooklyn. Nearly 60 CERT volunteers representing 29 different teams have helped visitors fill out intake forms and have escorted them through the center. Collectively, they have logged over 422 hours at the center.

The CERT program is a collaborative effort among OEM and the New York City Police and Fire Departments. For more information about the program, or if you are interested in becoming a CERT volunteer, call 311 or visit [www.nyc.gov/cert](http://www.nyc.gov/cert).

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