



NYC EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT

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Press Office: 718-422-4888

For Immediate Release
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NYC EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT HOSTS DISASTER EXERCISE FOR COMMUNITY EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM (CERT) VOLUNTEERS ON RANDALL'S ISLAND

Over 100 volunteers demonstrate emergency preparedness expertise

October 23, 2016 - New York City Emergency Management hosted a disaster exercise today on Randall's Island for the city's Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) members. Instructors from NYC Emergency Management, FDNY, and NYPD tested and reviewed the volunteers' emergency preparedness and response skills in fire suppression, search and rescue, medical operations, responding to and supporting an active disaster scene, setting up and staffing a service center. The CERT volunteers practiced their role in several simulated disaster scenarios including a building evacuation, subway car evacuation, and multiple fires. Over 100 CERT members representing all five boroughs were in attendance to assist New York City's first responders.

The exercise simulated a major disaster including a bus crash into a building causing multiple injuries, car crashes and fires. This scenario allowed the CERT volunteers to practice evacuations, search and rescue operations, and traffic management. Some volunteers played the role of disaster victims in the simulation while others assisted first responders with medical triage and fire suppression.

In addition to the disaster simulation, the full day's activities also included a response to a subway car evacuation, active shooter training, and training in how to run a service center to provide support to residents affected by an emergency.

"We have a great network of Community Emergency Response Team members all across New York City," said **NYC Emergency Management Commissioner Joseph Esposito**. "From hurricanes to building explosions, these dedicated volunteers readily come to the aid of their fellow New Yorkers. Exercises like today's simulations help them to prepare for the sights, sounds, and complexities they may experience when helping their communities during a real emergency."

Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT) in New York City

The New York City CERT program started in 2003 with 106 volunteers. Today there are more than 1,700 credentialed CERT volunteers representing more than 50 teams throughout New York City. New York City CERT volunteers participate in a 10-week training program in disaster preparedness and basic emergency response skills taught by active and retired members of the Police and Fire Departments. After completing training, CERTs support their local communities by assisting City agencies that prepare for and respond to emergencies.



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For more information about the CERT program, or if you are interested in becoming a CERT volunteer, call 311 or visit www.nyc.gov.

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