



The CERT Report

August 2010

CERT Goes to Haiti



FDNY Lt. Billy Croak, center, instructs Haitian trainees on how to put out fires with tools they have readily available.

On June 7, an 11-member NYC OEM, Fire Department, and Health Department team traveled to Port-au-Prince, Haiti, to help build a local CERT program. Over a 10-day period the team trained 412 Haitians. These trainees live in temporary shelters at the Petionville Club--a former golf course that now houses more than 50,000 people displaced by the 7.0 magnitude earthquake that struck near Port-au-Prince on January 12, 2010. The new Haitian CERT members trained by New York City instructors will help develop the program in other parts of Haiti.

The New York CERT team trained Haitians in fire safety, first aid, triage, light search and rescue, public health, water and sanitation, and disaster psychology. This was the first time the New York City CERT trainers, which included OEM's Herman Schaffer and Christian Quintanilla, as well as FDNY Lt. Billy Croak, taught the CERT program outside the United States.

The team returned on June 19 with some great stories, pictures, and new ideas to incorporate into the NYC CERT program.

[Read the team's journal on OEM's Facebook page.](#)

Two Big Days to Help New York City Prepare

Dog Days of Summer



MN3 team member Tao Ping Lin distributed dry ice and information from Con Edison to community members in Sunset Park due to the heat in early July.

It should come as no surprise to any New Yorker that the past month has been one of the hottest on record. Temperatures and heat indices have pushed 100 degrees on numerous occasions and the warm weather has continued into August.

CERT teams around the city have either been called out to respond or have been asked to place their teams on standby in preparation for potential blackouts, service disruptions, or other complications due to the heat. OEM would like to thank all of these teams for remaining available and ready to help their neighbors if the need arises.

Most importantly, CERT volunteers should remember to take care of themselves and those close to them by staying informed about the weather and taking proper precautions. Stay well-hydrated and keep in a cool place during the hottest parts of the day. If cooling centers are open, make sure to relay this information to your community connections so they are aware of what is available. When cooling centers are open, the locations can be found on the [OEM website](#).

Map Your Networks!



Members of BX7, BX10, and BX10 Co-op City at last year's National Night Out with Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz, Jr.

Two big dates occur in August and September: National Night Out on August 3 and the National Preparedness Month Kickoff Event on September 2. CERT encourages participation in these events, during which volunteers distribute Ready NY literature and educate fellow New Yorkers about emergency preparedness.

National Night Out is sponsored by the National Association of Town Watch and organized by NYPD precincts for their communities. Police precincts, local businesses, and civic organizations take part in games, information distribution, and other activities to rally against crime. More than 30 NYC CERT teams participated in this year's National Night Out.

The National Preparedness Month is designed to teach emergency preparedness in the home, workplace, school, and community. There are plenty of ways to get involved on September 2 and throughout the entire month, so stay tuned to your email or check the [Citizen Corps Council](#) web page for more information.

The Talented Mr. and Mrs. CERT

While all CERT volunteers have the same basic training, each volunteer has his or her own mental and physical cache of resources that can be utilized in the event of an emergency.

This is no best illustrated by the MN3 CERT team which has been activated twice in the past few months. First, team members were deployed to the scene of the seven-alarm fire on Grand Street in Chinatown, mentioned in a previous edition of the CERT Report, to translate and interpret for affected residents. Next, on July 8, the team was asked to assist Con Edison with dry ice distribution in the blacked-out Sunset Park section of Brooklyn, another neighborhood with a large Chinese population.

The team members' ability to speak multiple languages helped the team disseminate necessary information to locals and inform them of the resources available.

As part of the interested participant screening process, the CERT program asks all recruits what languages they speak and if they have any special skills. Take a moment to survey your fellow team members. You may be surprised by what you find!

Fall CERT Training

The next round of the 10-week basic CERT training will begin in September. While still a month away, team leadership should please be aware of interested participants coming to your teams.

Team members can help out by interviewing interested participants. When someone is interested in CERT, his or her information is sent to the team leadership to schedule an interview. A form must be submitted for each recruit and can be obtained by contacting cert@oem.nyc.gov.



A map of downtown Manhattan showing the locations of Automated External Defibrillators.

The CERT program has asked teams to get out into their communities and form connections with local businesses, stores, organizations, and entities to build Community Disaster Networks. Establishing these networks will facilitate coordination leading up to and following a disaster, and will better enable teams to serve their communities.

The MN1 - Tribeca CERT team has taken this project another step. In addition to reaching out to local entities, team members have added another layer to the district map that includes the locations of Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs). The map includes a file that gives the site, street address, and floors on which the AEDs are located.

Compilations of information like this can be invaluable in an emergency. This is a great project, one that the CERT program hopes more teams will pursue along with similar outreach efforts. Feel free to submit ideas and stories about the good work your teams are performing in your communities.

CERT Quiz (Summer Edition)

1. How many hours of work have NYC CERT volunteers put in so far this year?
2. What should New Yorkers do if they would like to open a fire hydrant to stay cool?
3. When was the last tornado to hit New York City?

Answers:

1. *Through June, NYC CERT volunteers have reported contributing 9,296 hours to preparing and helping their communities! Get those monthly reports in so that all the hard work of your team members is counted.*
2. *New Yorkers can contact their local firehouse to obtain a spray cap. Without a spray cap, a hydrant can waste up to 1,000 gallons of water a minute and decrease pressure throughout the system.*
3. *A tornado touched down near Riverdale in the Bronx on Sunday July 25, 2010.*

For more information about NYC OEM CERT, log on to the website at www.nyc.gov/cert or call the CERT hotline at (718) 422 - 8585.

CERT is always looking to train motivated individuals to prepare for and respond to emergencies. Anyone looking for more information may contact the CERT hotline or e-mail cert@oem.nyc.gov.

Check out the National FEMA CERT Newsletter:
<http://www.citizencorps.gov/cert/newsletter.shtm>

