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OEM ANNOUNCES NEW ROUND OF TRAINING PROGRAMS FOR COMMUNITY EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAMS (CERT)

The New York City Office of Emergency Management today announced the next phase of Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) trainings throughout the City. Five new CERTs will begin an extensive, 11 week training program. Upon their completion of the training program, the number of CERTs in the five boroughs will rise to 27.

Queens Community Board 7, representing the neighborhoods of **Flushing, Bay Terrace, Whitestone and College Point,** will have a team participating in the current training cycle. The team is comprised of members from several active civic groups in the area, including the staff of CB 7, the Bay Terrace Community Alliance, the Residents of LeHavre, the Queensboro Hill Civic Association and the Cord Meyer Development group, as well as local Sheraton Hotel employees and New York Hospital employees.

The CERT program aims to help individuals take a more active role in emergency response and preparedness. CERT members are trained in basic disaster response skills so they can assist emergency response personnel during crises in their communities. CERT members are taught by members of OEM, as well as the Fire and Police Departments. They learn basic disaster response skills, such as fire safety, light search and rescue, and medical operations. CERTs also work to educate residents about the many hazards they may face and ways they can better prepare for all types of emergencies.

OEM plans to have one CERT in every Community Board in the City by the end of 2006. Individuals interested in starting a CERT in their community, or joining an existing team, should call 311 or visit OEM's website: www.nyc.gov/oem.

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NOTE: **Members of the media seeking to observe a CERT training session should contact the OEM Press Office at the above number.**