



The CERT Report

February 2011

Mayor Bloomberg Honors CERT Graduating Class



Mayor Bloomberg addresses the CERT graduates at the Fiorello H. LaGuardia High School of Music & Art and Performing Arts.

On January 13, 122 CERT volunteers graduated from the 10-week basic training course. The ceremony was attended by the graduates and their friends and family, Mayor Bloomberg, OEM Commissioner Bruno, Fire Commissioner Cassano, and Police Commissioner Kelly. Chief Service Officer Diahann Billings-Burford, as well as NYPD and FDNY personnel, also attended.

"The newest members of the CERT team are an integral part of our emergency preparedness efforts," said Mayor Bloomberg. "CERT team members are a direct connection to the people of New York and the new members graduating today will help us protect our city during future emergency events."

"Whether they are asked to dig out fire hydrants after a blizzard or deliver ice to their neighbors during a power outage, CERT volunteers have shown time and time again that they are ready to help out at a moment's notice, and we are extremely grateful for their service," added Commissioner Bruno.

Congratulations to the new graduates, who will go on to join their area's teams and serve the city. Help us welcome them to the NYC CERT family and please be sure to say hi to new faces that you see at your team meetings.

Special thanks to the Manhattan 7 team whose members hosted the event and provided hands-on assistance throughout the ceremony.

NYC OEM CERT
John D. Solomon Emergency Preparedness
Award

Winter Weather Puts CERT to Work



BX8 team chief Jodie Colon and deputy chief Urie Stern digging out a fire hydrant over the weekend of January 28.

Anyone recently who has spent time in New York City has experienced a significant amount of snowfall. While most of the snow has either melted or been removed, New Yorkers spent many hours digging out cars, shoveling sidewalks, and dealing with all sorts of complications.

CERT teams across the city helped in this regard. CERT members were asked to report dangerous conditions in their communities, including snow blocking critical infrastructure and icy roadways, and to reach out to connections in their Community Disaster Networks that may need assistance. In addition, CERT boots hit the ground to help the City clear snow off fire hydrants so firefighters don't have to dig through snow in the middle of an emergency.

More than 25 teams responded in force, clearing over 170 hydrants. We commend everyone who helped their neighbors cope with this winter weather.

The More You Know: Steam



Mayor Bloomberg presents the first annual John D. Solomon Award to members of the Solomon family as Commissioner Bruno and Manhattan 8 - ESNA team chief Jay Schofield observe.

Mayor Bloomberg presented the family of John Solomon with the inaugural John D. Solomon Emergency Preparedness Award, honoring his life of volunteerism and service, at the Cycle 15 CERT graduation ceremony.

Solomon passed away in November 2010, but not before making his mark on the emergency preparedness community in New York City. A CERT team member with Manhattan 8 - ESNA, he regularly attended trainings, drills, deployments, and planned events. He worked with his daughters to bring preparedness messaging to their peers. He even maintained a blog and career in journalism that spoke about preparedness in an educated, insightful, and informative manner. He kept at this mission while battling cancer for the last two years of his life.

The award is engraved with the message, "May his resolute conviction and purposeful encouragement serve as a never-ending example for community preparedness in New York City."

The John D. Solomon Emergency Preparedness Award is presented annually to a CERT member who shows outstanding dedication to the program and who embodies Solomon's enthusiasm for volunteerism and community preparedness. A team of OEM staff and CERT members will confer each year to decide which volunteer will receive the award.

Port Richmond CERT Recognizes Volunteer Service

Special thanks to Frank Marino of the Staten Island 1 - Port Richmond CERT team for reporting this article.

33 members of the Staten Island 1 - Port Richmond CERT team this year received the [President's Volunteer Service Award](#). The award is presented annually to individuals, groups, and families who have met or exceeded requirements for volunteer service and have demonstrated exemplary citizenship through volunteering.

"We are especially proud of our volunteers who have made volunteer service a central part of their lives," said team chief John Tidona. "These recipients are role models for all Americans."

The award has four levels based on the amount of time served. The President's Call to Service Award, the most prestigious level, recognizes individuals who have spent over 4,000 hours volunteering. Recipients receive a certificate and letter from President Barack Obama.

Congratulations to the Port Richmond team members who were honored this year. The NYC CERT program encourages teams to recognize the hard work performed by all CERT members citywide.

Team Updates



A steam leak on Broadway is contained by Con Edison and blocked off.

The following report was submitted by Manhattan 8 - UES team member Nell Semel.

Steam is a common occurrence in New York City, particularly in Manhattan. However, it may not be as innocuous as you believe.

"Steam coming out of a manhole or sewer either means that there is a leak in the steam system or a leak in the water pipes, which is hitting the hot steam pipe. The steam coming up is not necessarily an emergency but it should be checked out by Con Ed to ensure it doesn't indicate a dangerous condition. Con Ed has inspectors who check the system and will go to the location reported."

"If you see steam on streets, call us right away at 1-800-75-CONED (752-6633). We need to check it out," said a representative from Con Ed. "To avoid potential injury, do not walk through the steam or on the manhole cover."

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CERT Quiz (Snow Edition)

1. What does the City do with all the snow?
2. Why isn't salt spread on streets as a preventative measure?
3. What are some complications to look out for after the snow has stopped falling?

Answers:

1. When snow accumulates to a given point, the City deploys [snow melters](#). The melters can process up to 60 tons of snow in an hour, the remnants of which are passed through filters and drained through approved sewers.
2. Salt is most effective when the temperature is above 20 degrees Fahrenheit and can mix with snow to turn it into slush, which can then be plowed. Spreading salt on a bare road might cause it to bounce off the surface to which it is being applied, and leaves it open to blow away in the wind or be knocked away by car tires.
3. In addition to the typical complications related to traveling on snow- and ice-covered streets

With 56 teams and 1,400 volunteers, it is hard to keep track of all the great work that is being done by members of the NYC CERT program. During a team chief meeting held on December 14 at OEM headquarters CERT team leadership presented their teams' accomplishments for the past year.

Team chiefs spoke about participating in drills and exercises; doing outreach to senior centers, faith-based organizations, and local businesses; networking with other teams; and responding to major events in the community like the Queens macroburst and Grand Street fire. Eight team chiefs mentioned reaching out to their local hospitals and healthcare institutions.

The teams are growing by leaps and bounds, networking with first responders and training on their own during team events and meetings.

This is great news. Keep up the good work, CERT!

and sidewalks, the weight and sheer volume of snow can cause many problems. Fire hydrants can be covered, hindering emergency response. After many coatings, snow can get dense and heavy, weighing down on exposed utilities and flat surfaces.

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, which includes a piece about the NYC CERT training mission to Haiti following the earthquake in January 2010: <http://www.citizencorps.gov/cert/newsletter.shtm>



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