

For Immediate Release
#37-19

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

CERT volunteers practice emergency preparedness and response skills

April 29, 2019 – The New York City Emergency Management Department hosted a disaster exercise on Randall's Island for the City's Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) members on Sunday, April 28, 2019. 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, and planning a search for a missing person. The CERT volunteers practiced their roles in several simulated disaster scenarios including a building evacuation and multiple fires. Dozens of CERT members representing all five boroughs attended the simulation.

“New York City Community Emergency Response Team members are vital assets who can be deployed to assist first responders during emergencies,” **NYC Emergency Management Commissioner Joseph Esposito** said. “Through disaster simulation drills, we ensure that CERT members are adequately trained and prepared. The Randall's Island Disaster Exercise offers a great opportunity for CERTs to continue to hone their response skills.”

The simulation included vehicle collisions and fires that caused multiple injuries. This scenario allowed the CERT volunteers to practice evacuations, search and rescue operations, and traffic management. Volunteers also practiced medical triage and fire suppression. Members of the NYPD Explorers program participated in the drill, acting as victims.

“The CERT disaster simulation exercise is extremely important because it offers a refresher on response skills that CERT members learned but may not use in their day-to-day work,” **Bronx CERT member Tracie Lord** said. “Emergencies can happen suddenly, so it's important that we stay on the ready.”

“With the proper training, anyone can help their community during emergencies,” **Brooklyn CERT member Christie Galla** said. “Simulation exercises are essential because it gives CERT members the opportunity to improve their skills and familiarize themselves with emergency scenarios.”

In addition to the disaster simulation, the full day's activities included training in point-to-point radio communications and Stop the Bleed. Stop the Bleed is a national awareness campaign aimed at encouraging and training individuals to assist during a bleeding emergency in the event professional help is not available.

Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT) in New York City

The New York City Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program started in 2003 with 106 volunteers. Today there are more than 1,200 credentialed CERT volunteers representing more than 50 teams throughout New York City. NYC CERT volunteers participate in a 10-session basic training program where they receive instruction from active members of the NYPD, FDNY and NYC Emergency Management. Volunteers are trained in disaster preparedness and basic emergency response skills, including fire safety, light search and rescue, disaster medical operations, and traffic management. After completing basic training, new members join local CERTs to support their communities by assisting City agencies that prepare for and respond to emergencies.

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

-30-

MEDIA CONTACT: Tashawn Brown/Omar Bourne (718) 422-4888

STAY CONNECTED: Twitter: @NotifyNYC (emergency notifications)
@nycemergencygmt (emergency preparedness info)
Facebook: /NYCemergencymanagement