



NYC EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT

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NEW YORK CITY COMMUNITY EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM (NYC CERT) PROGRAM WELCOMES 26 NEW MEMBERS

New graduates are joining 24 teams of credentialed volunteers to help their communities during emergencies

{[Click to watch the graduation](#)}

May 11, 2022 – The New York City Emergency Management Department welcomed 26 new Community Emergency Response Team (NYC CERT) volunteers to its program during a virtual graduation ceremony on Monday, May 9. The NYC CERT basic training cycle includes 10 sessions that focus on disaster preparedness and emergency response, equipping volunteers with skills in basic fire safety, search and rescue, traffic management, and first aid and triage. NYC Emergency Management offered the training program with instructors from the New York City Fire Department (FDNY) and New York City Police Department (NYPD) Auxiliary Unit. The full graduation ceremony is available [here](#).

“Community Emergency Response Teams are an integral part of the City’s emergency planning. Every year groups of New Yorkers from diverse backgrounds and careers commit to become CERT volunteers who serve New York City residents. CERT members are a critical resource in supporting New Yorkers impacted by disasters,” said **New York City Emergency Management Commissioner Zach Iscol**. “On behalf of NYC Emergency Management, I congratulate the 26 graduates and look forward to the great work they will do in their communities.”

During the ceremony, a plaque was presented to longtime CERT instructor, NYPD Detective Tammy Sheedy, who is retiring from the police department at the end of the year. Detective Sheedy has trained volunteers throughout her career, with both the NYPD Auxiliary Unit and the NYC CERT program. She joined the force in 2002 and after graduation, worked at 111 Precinct where she later became the auxiliary coordinator. In 2012, she became an instructor for the CERT program and now serves as the digital communications officer.

“For 19 years, New York City Community Emergency Response Team members have helped to keep the people of our great city safe,” **Police Commissioner Keechant L. Sewell** said. “These dedicated volunteers give back to their communities in a variety of ways, and their work exemplifies our guiding principles of public service. I want to thank NYC Emergency Management, the FDNY, and every CERT instructor, trainer, and staff member for their support of this important public-safety program.”

“The FDNY is proud to be a longtime partner with NYC Emergency Management’s Community Emergency Response Teams. The program is an integral part of the city’s response to major emergencies, and the impact of these volunteers cannot be overstated. This training means our communities are prepared and strong. We join NYC Emergency Management and the other

agencies in our gratitude and congratulations to the graduates, and we look forward to the work they will do to support communities across the city,” said **Acting Fire Commissioner Laura Kavanagh**.

NYC CERT members responded to both planned and unplanned events, including the Hometown Heroes Parade, 5 Boro Bike Tour, the Macy’s 4th of July Fireworks celebration, the Macy’s Thanksgiving Day Parade, and the City’s response to the flash flood emergency caused by Hurricane Ida. In January, CERT members were also deployed to provide support during the annual Coney Island Polar Bear Plunge. During the event, a participant was seen face down in the water and in need of aid. The CERT members present quickly jumped in to assist, with Brooklyn 6 CERT member Britta Husack providing lifesaving CPR.

“My favorite part about the [NYC CERT] program has been the opportunity to meet folks from all walks of life who share a desire to play a positive role in their communities,” said **Christine Betts, graduate of the NYC CERT program**. “I have also loved learning about all the resources available in NYC and have gained a deep sense of respect for the organizations that keep us safe when disasters happen.”

Since its launch, NYC CERT has responded to a host of emergencies, and local teams quickly adapt to the City’s specific emergency needs. CERT members also work year-round to ensure their communities are prepared for emergencies, providing information and resources to assist residents with creating an emergency plan for their friends and family. NYC Emergency Management hosts Community Emergency Response Team training cycles three times a year. For more information about the program, or if you are interested in becoming a volunteer, call 311 or visit NYC.gov/cert.

Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT) in New York City

The New York City CERT program started in 2003 with 106 volunteers. Today, there are 24 teams of credentialed volunteers covering all 59 NYC community boards. NYC CERT volunteers participate in a 10-session basic training program where they receive instruction from active members of the FDNY, FDNY-EMS, NYPD, 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.

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