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**For Immediate Release**

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**NYC EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT HOSTS DISASTER SIMULATION EXERCISE  
FOR COMMUNITY EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM (CERT) VOLUNTEERS IN  
QUEENS**

**March 29, 2019** – The New York City Emergency Management Department hosted a disaster simulation exercise for Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) volunteers at the Metropolitan Expeditionary Learning School in Forest Hills, Queens on Thursday, March 28. 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, and traffic management.

“Disaster simulations allow CERT volunteers the opportunity to put their training to the test,” **said NYC Emergency Management Commissioner Joseph Esposito.** “Whether extinguishing a fire or assisting with traffic management, it’s important that CERT volunteers are well-equipped to assist first responders during emergencies.”

During the exercise, the CERT volunteers practiced their roles in several simulated disaster scenarios including extinguishing live fires, executing basic triage assignments, and assisting and removing trapped victims. The disaster simulation exercise wraps up the 33rd CERT basic training cycle. Currently, there are 10 Community Emergency Response Teams throughout Queens with 210 members.

**Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT) in New York City**

The New York City CERT program started in 2003 with 106 volunteers. Today, there are more than 50 CERT teams and more than 1,200 credentialed CERT volunteers throughout the five boroughs. 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](http://www.nyc.gov).

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