



MARIN COUNTY CERT TRANSITION PLAN

An overview of the new
Marin County CERT Program,
its implementation, and the changes that will
occur for all current CERT program
administrators

DECEMBER 2010

Prepared for and distributed by the
San Rafael Office of Emergency Services
on behalf of the Marin County CERT Standardization Committee
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Since January of this year we have been committed to exploring the feasibility of taking six independent CERT training programs and combining them into one coordinated, countywide program. Through numerous meetings and several all day workshops we have been able to realize the benefits of a consolidated CERT training program. Together we have been able to create a comprehensive program that represents all of Marin County and provides an enhanced, streamlined, and more efficient training to the residents. The details of this new Marin County CERT program can be found in this Transition Plan.

It is important to understand that this plan does not reflect all information as it relates to the development of the Marin County CERT program and will be updated as program enhancements continue to occur.

CERT Standardization Committee Participants (by training zone)

Central Marin

Battalion Chief Paul Hager, Corte Madera Fire Department
Firefighter Kevin Rose, Corte Madera Fire Department
Fire Captain Craig Carroll, Ross Valley Fire Department
Firefighter Tom Timmer, Larkspur Fire Department

Novato

Battalion Chief Gerald McCarthy, Novato Fire Protection District
Battalion Chief Bill Tyler, Novato Fire Protection District
Fire Training Specialist Sandy Wargo, Novato Fire Protection District

San Rafael/Marinwood

Angela Del Ponte, Emergency Services Coordinator, San Rafael OES
Steven Hancock, Emergency Services Manager, San Rafael OES
Fire Chief Tom Roach, Marinwood Fire Department

Southern Marin

Engineer Paramedic Larry Yoell, Southern Marin Fire Protection District
Fire Captain Bill Schardt, Mill Valley Fire Department
Fire Captain Mike St. John, Mill Valley Fire Department

West Marin

Fire Chief Jim Fox, Inverness Public Utilities District
Basha Quilici, San Geronimo Disaster Council
Libby Coleman, West Marin Disaster Coordinator

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BACKGROUND OF MARIN COUNTY CERT

Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training is a national program that was adopted in Marin County in the 1990 and continues to be provided in all areas of Marin County today. The skills taught in CERT courses are valuable and life-saving skills which include fire safety and suppression, disaster medical operations, and light search and rescue. The community understands more and more the importance of obtaining these skills in order to be more self sufficient at the time of a disaster or emergency and be empowered to take care of themselves, their families, and their neighbors.

While CERT is a national program, its adoption and application at the local level is varied. Training in Marin County has historically been provided by six distinct and independent training programs:

- Southern Marin CERT
- West Marin CERT
- San Rafael CERT
- Central Marin CERT
- Marinwood CERT
- Novato HEART

Each of the six programs varied in the following areas:

- Length of course ranged from 10 – 21 hours
- Registration fees ranged from \$30 - \$100
- Some agencies provided free CERT response backpacks and other supplies while other agencies charged additionally for them or included them in the registration fees
- Each program ran its own scheduling, administration, marketing, promotion, and course logistics

We attempted to quantify the total cost of the programs and their return on investment looking at all six CERT programs over the course of 2009. It was determined that we are committing significant resources for the benefit of a very small number of students trained. Here is a summary of all CERT Basic classes provided in 2009:

- Total Classes Offered: 15
- Total Hours of Instruction: 244
- Total Students Trained: 274
- Total Cost: ??? (significant)

Each of the six programs has done its own administration support, instructor hours, coordinates supplies & logistics, and marketing for each session held. With the differences in the various programs, those seeking training would “shop” around calling agencies to determine what is different in each class and why. These calls were frequent and time consuming to each program and served only to confuse the community.

Several attempts have been made in past years to collaborate and work towards one common, shared CERT program for the Marin community. Due to political challenges, jurisdictional boundaries, and the proprietorship to program design & implementation; those attempts were unsuccessful and ultimately led to the development of six independent programs.

It is important to keep in mind that even while there were six separate programs, the training provided in each program was still of high quality and to the benefit of the community.



MOVING FORWARD TOGETHER

Recognizing the challenges of running six independent CERT programs and working with limited resources, each of the respective CERT programs have been committed to working towards a collective, multi-jurisdictional Marin County CERT program beginning in 2011. The CERT training coordinators from each program have been meeting since January 2010 to evaluate the feasibility in creating a true Marin County CERT program. Together, the conclusion has been made that there is a better way to coordinate this program with not only a benefit to the agencies involved, but to the community as a whole.

It was agreed that beginning in 2011, each program would drop its independent programs in support of participation in the *Marin County CERT* program.

LIMITATIONS

The first year's efforts of the new Marin County CERT program will focus only on CERT basic training, which is the standard introductory training provided to students. This is being done with the idea of creating a more accessible and better organized program for the community.

CERT refresher courses, advanced training opportunities, and the overall management of CERT trained residents will still be at the discretion of each local agency. While it is important to recognize the current focus of the Marin County CERT program only being on CERT basic training, we will endeavor to coordinate and share CERT refresher and advanced training opportunities with other local agencies.

Once the Marin County CERT program is implemented and the success of a shared program is realized by all, we will continue to explore further ways to consolidate efforts, share resources, and otherwise create an even more comprehensive program.

TRAINING ZONES

Five training zones have been created within the Marin County CERT program. These training zones reflect geographic regions within Marin County in which residents can receive CERT basic training. The 2011 Marin County CERT training zones are:

- Southern Marin (Sausalito, Mill Valley, Tiburon, Belvedere)
- Central Marin (Corte Madera, Larkspur, Fairfax, San Anselmo, Ross)
- San Rafael
- Novato
- West Marin (all unincorporated areas of West Marin)

Training zone coordinators

Each training zone has elected one person to act as a training zone coordinator and represent their entire training zone. This lead person will be the primary person to work with the Marin County CERT Coordinator on the continued development and refinement of the program. The following individuals have been identified as training zone coordinators for 2011:

- Southern Marin - Larry Yoell, Southern Marin Fire Protection District
- Central Marin – Craig Carroll, Ross Valley Fire Department
- San Rafael – Angela Del Ponte, San Rafael OES
- Novato – Sandy Wargo, Novato Fire Protection District
- West Marin – Libby Coleman, West Marin Disaster Coordinator



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STUDENT FEES

All students attending a CERT basic training, regardless of which training zone they are attending training in, will pay a set student fee of \$30.00. There will be no family or group discounts. The fee goes to cover student supplies and materials to be used during the training. Students will be able to pay their registration online or by check made payable to Marin County CERT. All student fees will be deposited into a Marin County CERT account that will be used to support and maintain the program and continue the purchasing of supplies and materials. The administration of the bank account will be handled by the Marin County CERT Coordinator.

2011 TRAINING SCHEDULE / CALENDAR

Beginning in 2011, each training zone within the Marin County CERT program will offer two CERT basic courses each year. A total of ten classes will be offered throughout the county with a different class beginning each month in a different zone, with the exception of July and December, no classes will be held during those two months. The 2011 Marin County CERT basic training schedule is:

- January – West Marin
- February – Novato
- March – Central Marin
- April – San Rafael
- May – West Marin
- June – Southern Marin
- July – NO CLASS
- August - Novato
- September – San Rafael
- October – Southern Marin
- November – Central Marin
- December – NO CLASS

CERT BASIC CURRICULUM

Student Manual

A Marin County CERT manual, created under the oversight of the Marin County Disaster Council, has been in use for several years for all training programs except San Rafael and Novato. San Rafael as well as Novato have used their own manuals. It was agreed that beginning in 2011 the Marin County CERT manual would be updated and modeled to reflect the new Marin County CERT program. Each training zone has had representatives involved in creating a new Marin County CERT basic training student manual. This manual incorporated elements from the previous county manual as well as San Rafael's and Novato's manuals. The newly created student manual will once again be presented to the Marin County Disaster & Citizens Corps Council for review and approval. Beginning in 2011, each training zone will utilize the new Marin County CERT student manual for its training purposes.

Instructional Slides

To go along with the updating of the student manual, a new set of instructional/presentation slides have been created. These new slides will follow the curriculum as provided in the student manual and will provide the basis for in class instruction. Each training zone will utilize these new presentation slides for instruction during basic training.

Hours of Instruction

Each training zone will provide 15 hours of instruction for basic training. The hours of instruction will be broken down, as feasible, as outlined in the next section *Units of Instruction*. The core components as outlined in FEMA's CERT curriculum will be adhered to.



Units of Instruction

- Unit 1. Introduction (1 hour)
Includes a review of general emergency preparedness information, protection for volunteers, and a brief review of disaster psychology.
- Unit 2. CERT Organization (2 hours)
Brief review of the history of CERT and its role in Marin County as well as an introduction to CERT team organization by way of using the Incident Command System. Also included in this unit is an introduction to the principles of size-up and CERT communications.
- Unit 3. Disaster Medical Operations (4 hours)
Overview of injuries commonly seen in disasters, techniques for treating injuries and transporting patients. Introduction to triage and how to set up medical treatment areas.
- Unit 4. Fire Safety & Suppression (2 hours)
Review of fire chemistry and the equipment and techniques used for extinguishing fires. An overview of the recommended personal protective equipment to use when fighting fires as well as special considerations when working in smoky conditions and dealing with hazardous materials.
- Unit 5. Light Search & Rescue (3 hours)
Introduction to building safety considerations and hazards. Techniques used for conducting light search and rescue, to include cribbing and leveraging, the safe use of ladders, and forcible entry. Tools and resources that can be used as well as the proper use of building markings.
- Unit 6. Disaster Simulation & Next Steps (3 hours)
Summary review of all the previous units with a comprehensive exercise incorporating all elements of CERT basic training.

SUPPLIES

Student Supplies

Students who attend CERT basic training will receive the following as part of their \$30 student fee:

- Student manual
- Helmet
- Vest
- Protective eye wear
- CERT ID card (after completion of course)
- Certificate of completion (after completion of course)

**The West Marin training zone will continue to provide gloves to students as part of their student fees.*

The Marin County CERT Coordinator will administer the purchase and delivery of the needed supplies to each training zone. Training zones may elect to cache enough supplies to support their two basic trainings for the year or acquire the supplies prior to each training held. Training zone instructors will be responsible for the distribution of supplies and materials to students at the beginning of class. The CERT ID card and certificate of completion will be distributed by the Marin County CERT Coordinator directly to the student after the completion of the course.



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Program Supplies

Supplies to support the program will be administered and supported by the Marin County CERT Coordinator. Administrative supplies like liability waivers, DSW forms, instructional aides, etc. can be acquired from the Marin County CERT Coordinator.

WEBSITE

A new website has been created to support the Marin County CERT program, the website URL is www.marincountycert.org. This website is a comprehensive training website providing the training calendar, description of program & training zones, training resources, as well as instructor materials behind a password protected login. This website provides online registration and payment options for students. All agencies should link to this website for all CERT training information. If they desire, local agencies should maintain their own websites to describe how CERT is applied in their communities but still support a proactive push for people to access the Marin County CERT website. Website administration is the responsibility of the Marin County CERT Coordinator. Finances for the website have been covered initially by grant funding.

FINANCES

Grant Award

The Marin County CERT program has received a grant award in the amount of \$21,300 through the 2010 State Homeland Security Grant program. These grant funds are intended to cover the initial year start-up costs associated with the program (website, marketing, manuals, etc.) as well as one year of part-time funding for the Marin County CERT Coordinator position. The San Rafael Office of Emergency Services (SROES) is acting as the fiscal agent for the grant funds. This is a reimbursement grant with SROES providing the initial outlay of funds. There is slight discretion in how the funds are used and minor adjustments can be made to how grants funds are spent as long as they are still within the grant framework. The use of grant funds is managed by SROES with consultation from the training zone coordinators.

Student Fees

All student fees will be deposited into a Marin County CERT bank account which will be administered by the Marin County CERT Coordinator. Student fees will be used to support the purchase of student manuals, helmets, vests, protective eye wear, certificate of completion, and CERT ID card. The Marin County CERT Coordinator will work with each Training Zone Coordinator to manage the bank account and CERT funds as well as ultimately establish a budget for the use of funds.

* Note: CERT helmets and vests may be acquired from California Volunteers for free.



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MARKETING AND PROMOTION

A new Marin County CERT logo has been adopted for use throughout the County as we are now working as a countywide CERT program. This logo will be incorporated into a countywide marketing and promotion campaign to promote Marin County CERT and will be administered by the Marin County CERT Coordinator. It is intended that all local agencies will utilize the Marin County CERT materials and thus will not create their own, individual marketing materials. Any assistance or specific marketing product can be requested from the Marin County CERT Coordinator. All funding to support the development and distribution of marketing materials will initially be paid for by the grant award and ultimately will be supported by student fees.

As added value for all of us is one place for any community member to now get information regarding CERT training. This will lessen the burden on each of our agencies in handling individual resident requests. One number and one website can now provide CERT training information to anyone from throughout the county and will be the place the community at a large will come to know as the place for CERT training information. This new website is www.marincountycert.org and the Marin County CERT telephone number is 415-485-3409.

MARIN COUNTY CERT COORDINATOR

Through the process of designing the Marin County CERT program, it was obvious there would be a great benefit to all if one person was able to coordinate the continued refinement and implementation of the program. Recognizing this, it was agreed that a grant request would be developed to fund a part-time coordinator position. The grant request was ultimately funded (see FINANCES) and a job description and recruitment was undertaken. SROES also agreed to offer additional funds towards the funding of the position. The candidates for the position went through a written test as well as an oral board interview. The interview panel was made up of representatives from each training zone.

The Marin County CERT Coordinator is managed by the SROES Emergency Services Manager. The position, while managed by SROES, works for the benefit of the entire program and gets guidance from the five training zone coordinators. The Marin County CERT Coordinator will be responsible for the overall administration and logistics associated with the program, including, but not limited to; student recruitment, marketing & promotion, website creation & maintenance, acquisition of training supplies, delivery of instructional materials to trainers & students, records retention, and overall logistical and administrative support for the program. One of the tasks as outlined in the job description and grant request was that the coordinator position will seek sustained funding opportunities to support the position into the future.



REGISTRATION & TRAINING PROCESS

One of the benefits of a shared program is a more fluid and streamlined process for registration and administration of CERT students. The following information provides a summary example of the steps associated with a student's registration and the routine of a CERT basic training course.

1. A student from anywhere in the county interested in CERT training can get detailed course information by going to www.marincounty.cert.org or calling 485-3409.
2. The student can register and pay online for the next course of their choosing or print up a registration form and mail to the Marin County CERT Coordinator.
3. All payments will be received and managed by the Marin County CERT Coordinator.
4. The Marin County CERT Coordinator will provide the student with a course confirmation email providing course details and other general information.
5. The Marin County CERT Coordinator will monitor class sizes, cap student enrollment when necessary, and will send a final roster to the training zone coordinator prior to the beginning of class. It is the responsibility of the training zone coordinator to pass on the course roster to the appropriate instructor(s).
6. The Marin County CERT Coordinator will ensure that the training zone has the needed student manuals, supplies, as well as other course materials as needed. This will include a camera with instructions for taking student photos for use with CERT ID cards. The training zone is responsible for taking photos and forwarding photos on to Marin County CERT Coordinator for processing ID cards.
7. The training zone will provide disaster service worker (DSW) oath of loyalty and ensure students complete the DSW form appropriately. The training zone will be responsible for signing this form as the oath provider and forwarding it on to the Marin County CERT Coordinator for processing.
8. Once the training is completed, the training zone will provide final student roster with attendance to Marin County CERT Coordinator.
9. The Marin County CERT Coordinator will mail directly to the student a Certificate of Completion as well as a CERT identification card.
10. The student will follow-through and make contact with their local agency to understand how CERT is applied in their local community. Local agency contacts will be provided to them as an appendix in the Marin County CERT Student Manual.

GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

There are many administrative tasks and functions associated with the Marin County CERT program that are being addressed now and will continue to be addressed into 2011. Any additional items needing clarification and/or development should be brought to the attention of the Marin County CERT Coordinator.

Liability Waivers

A Liability Waiver/Hold Harmless Agreement is being adopted for use in each training zone. The waiver is intended to hold harmless the training zone and all of our participating agencies from any personal claims, actions, suits, or injuries that may arise as a result of a student's participation in CERT training. This form will be provided to the training zone by the Marin County CERT Coordinator prior to the first class and will ultimately be retained by the Marin County CERT Coordinator for records retention.



Disaster Service Worker Process

A new MCCERT Disaster Service Worker Registration & Oath of Loyalty form (DSW form) has been created for use in all training zones. The DSW form will be provided to the training zone by the Marin County CERT Coordinator prior to the first class. The training zone will ensure that a trainer is present to provide the Oath of Loyalty at the beginning of class and that the form is completed and signed by both the student as well as the oath provider. Instructions for the proper completion of the DSW form will be provided by the Marin County CERT Coordinator. Completed forms will be returned to the Marin County CERT Coordinator for processing and records retention.

Evaluation forms

Evaluation forms are being developed to gain a student's satisfaction with the CERT enrollment and training process. This form is being developed by the MCCERT Coordinator and the Training Zone Coordinators. The form will be provided to each training zone with the intent of the student completing the form at the end of training. The training zone will first review the evaluation forms and then forward them to the MCCERT Coordinator for additional review.

CERT Identification

A MCCERT Identification card will be issued to all graduating students. The administration of the cards is the responsibility of the MCCERT Coordinator with the costs for equipment and cards being covered by the grant award as well as the student fees.

Release of Contact Information

A Release of Contact information form (RCI) has been developed and will be provided to each training zone. This form is intended to support the public release of a student's personal contact information to other interested community members engaged in CERT activities. Unless a student has signed a release, their personal contact information cannot be legally released to others in the community.

