

# Protect Yourself and Loved Ones with CERT Training

**Register by Feb. 22; seating is limited**

Disasters can strike quickly and without much warning. Would you know what to do if local emergency personnel were overwhelmed during a disaster or were unable to access your neighborhood for up to 72 hours?

Learn the skills necessary to be a successful part of emergency preparedness and response in order to assist during the first 72 hours following a disaster. Community Emergency Response Team members have the capability to assist in many ways, including during scheduled events.

Freeholder Patricia L. Walsh invites Somerset County residents to take advantage of the upcoming free CERT training, hosted by the Somerset County Office of Emergency Management <https://www.co.somerset.nj.us/government/public-health-safety/emergency-management>, starting Thursday, March 1. Seating is limited to the first 25 residents. **Registration forms are due by Thursday, Feb. 22.**

Classes will be held at the Somerset County Emergency Services Training Academy, located at 402 Roycefield Road in Hillsborough on March 1, 6, 8, 13, 15 and 20 from 7 p.m. to 10 p.m. and Saturday, March 10 and 24, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Students must attend all sessions and complete all modules to receive a CERT certificate of completion. Should a make-up session be required due to weather, it will be on Thursday, March 22.

"Somerset County is fortunate to have so many well-trained emergency responders who do a wonderful job and who are dedicated to serving their communities," said Freeholder Patricia Walsh, public health and safety liaison. "Depending on the emergency and the scope of the county or regional situation, our first responders may not be able to reach all areas of the county right away. For that reason, we are offering CERT training to help our residents stay safe during disasters.

"Protecting yourself and your family during an emergency requires planning. Just as emergency personnel train and prepare in advance for disaster, residents also can take training classes," she said. "Although people without training do respond to others in need during emergencies, the goal of the CERT program is to help residents do so effectively and efficiently without placing themselves in unnecessary danger."

Residents who complete CERT training have a better understanding of potential threats to their home and community. They know what to do to lessen the effects of hazards on themselves and their families.

CERT training is intended to give people decision-making, organizational, and practical skills necessary to offer immediate assistance to family members, neighbors, and associates while waiting for help. Participants learn about disaster preparedness and receive training in basic disaster-response skills such as disaster medical operations, fire safety and light search and rescue.

"We are very pleased with the interest that previous CERT programs have received. Since the program's inception in 2012, more than 470 Somerset County residents have been trained and are ready, willing and able to assist family and friends in their communities," said Freeholder Walsh. "No doubt many more residents could benefit from this experience and the sense of control that comes with knowledge and training."

For more information about Somerset County CERT and the CERT training program and to receive a registration form and course schedule, contact Somerset County Emergency Management Planner Nina Tchir, Somerset County Office of Emergency Management, at 908-725-5070 or [TchirN@co.somerset.nj.us](mailto:TchirN@co.somerset.nj.us) or go online to the CERT Volunteers page at <http://bit.ly/CERTInfo>. Links to the application and course schedule are at the bottom of the page.

To learn more about CERT, visit [www.ready.gov/community-emergency-response-team](http://www.ready.gov/community-emergency-response-team)

To stay up to date with Somerset County events and information, sign up for free email alerts at <http://www.co.somerset.nj.us/subscribe> or follow us on Facebook <http://www.facebook.com/SomersetCountyNJ> and Twitter <http://www.twitter.com/somersetcntynj>.

