



Perris News

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May CERT Classes Now Forming

To help citizens cope with the aftermath of an earthquake or other natural disaster, the City of Perris will hold a "Community Emergency Response Team" class from May 1 to May 3 at the Senior Citizen Center on D Street across from City Hall. Class times are Friday (May 1) from 6 p.m. to 10 p.m.; Saturday (May 2) from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sunday (May 3) from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Cost to reserve a spot is \$15 and the course is open to adults 18 years or older.

The class is the latest in a series of CERT training the City has sponsored over the last two years. Typically conducted over a weekend, the 20 hours of classroom and hands-on training encompasses the basics about surviving for a few days to a couple of weeks after a major calamity.

The curriculum includes basic first aid, how to use a fire extinguisher, techniques to lift a heavy object off a person trapped underneath, ways to drag an injured person safely away from danger and how to make a splint.

It's not exhaustive training, says Perris Fire Inspector Eric Cadden, and would not necessarily be recommended at a traffic accident where help is on the way.

But in a large-scale disaster, that help likely won't arrive in time, he said.

CERT training is offered throughout Southern California. Easily visible in their green helmets and matching vests, CERT-trained residents have directed traffic at major fires and helped removed the injured from the Metrolink train accident that killed 25 people in Los Angeles in September.

Cadden said people who complete the course will receive an emergency survival kit, which includes a helmet, vest, crowbar and other emergency tools. Cost of the training is covered by a state grant. The \$15 fee helps defer the cost of refreshments during the training.

City employee Sylvia Arvizu completed the training in 2008. She called the class invaluable.

"I learned a lot," said Arvizu, an Administrative Clerk. "I learned how to save other people and myself. The training is definitely worthwhile."



Volunteers learn the proper technique to lifting heavy objects during CERT training, which the City of Perris is offering from May 1 to May 3.



Volunteers practice putting out a fire.