



PUNTA GORDA FIRE DEPARTMENT

1410 TAMAMIAMI TRAIL * PUNTA GORDA, FLORIDA 33950
PHONE (941) 575-5529 * FAX (941) 575-5565

Community Emergency Response Team (CERT)

The Punta Gorda Fire Department is proud to sponsor the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program for residents of Punta Gorda.

Following a major disaster, your first responders who provide fire and emergency medical services may not be able to meet the demand for these services. Factors such as number of victims, communication failures, and road blockages may prevent residents from accessing emergency services they have come to expect at a moment's notice through 911. Residents may have to rely on each other for help in order to meet their immediate life saving and life sustaining needs.



All CERT course are delivered at the Public Safety Complex located at 1410 Tamiami Trail, Punta Gorda. The CERT training for community groups is usually delivered in 2 sessions per week (approx. 2.5-3 hrs) per session delivered over a over a 4-week period.

- **Session I, DISASTER PREPAREDNESS:** Addresses hazards to which people are vulnerable in their community. Materials cover actions that participants and their families take before, during, and after a disaster.
- **Session II, DISASTER FIRE SUPPRESSION:** Briefly covers fire chemistry, hazardous materials, fire hazards, and fire suppression strategies.
- **Session III, DISASTER MEDICAL OPERATIONS PART I:** Participants practice diagnosing and treating airway obstruction, bleeding, and shock by using simple triage and rapid treatment techniques.
- **Session IV, DISASTER MEDICAL OPERATIONS, PART II:** Covers evaluating patients by doing a head to toe assessment, establishing a medical treatment area, performing basic first aid, and practicing in a safe and sanitary manner.
- **Session V, LIGHT SEARCH AND RESCUE OPERATIONS:** Participants learn about search and rescue planning, size-up, search techniques, rescue techniques, and most important, rescuer safety.
- **Session VI, DISASTER PSYCHOLOGY AND TEAM ORGANIZATION:** Covers signs and symptoms that might be experienced by the disaster victim and worker.
- **Session VII, TERRORISM RESPONSE:** Participants will gain knowledge in terrorism threats and strategies in response.

- **Session VIII, COURSE REVIEW AND DISASTER SIMULATION** Finally, they practice the skills that they have learned during the previous six sessions in disaster activity.

Once participants have completed this training, it is important to keep involved and practiced in their skills. The Fire Department will offer periodic refresher sessions to reinforce the basic training.

CERT member graduates will receive a CERT backpack with disaster supplies.

CERT is about readiness, people helping people, rescuer safety, and doing the greatest good for the greatest number. CERT is a positive and realistic approach to emergency and disaster situations where citizens will be initially on their own and their actions can make a difference. Through training, citizens can manage utilities and put out small fires; search for and rescue victims safely; as well as provide basic medical aid to those in need.

