

Dryden Disaster Partnership Group

Background:

- October 2003: Cayuga Addiction Recovery Services (CARS) in Trumansburg has a fire which destroys the building and puts 43 residents out. The response is good, but highlights the need for further coordination between human needs agencies *before* a disaster strikes, so that the response *during* the disaster is smoother and more comprehensive. "You can't exchange business cards *at* the disaster."
- Increasing need for volunteers in the "uniformed services," as shown in the USA Today article found at: "http://www.usatoday.com/news/nation/2004-11-28-police-shortages-cover_x.htm?csp=22_itj"
 - Example: in the past 20 years, the number of paid and volunteer firefighters has dropped by 32,000, but population has risen by about *54 million*.
- A forum for discussion of disaster preparedness issues, including increased communication and coordination between human needs agencies, as well as recruiting more volunteers, was formed and had its first meeting on July 14, 2004, at the Dryden United Methodist Church. Working name: Dryden Disaster Partnership Group.

The Group:

- Representatives include Red Cross, Salvation Army, TC3, local churches and clergy, Dryden Central School District, Dryden Kitchen Cupboard, William George Agency for Children's Services (formerly George Junior Republic), Neptune Hose Company, Sertoma, Sertecens, and others.
- Aims to increase communication, information, and collaboration.
- Aims to assist in implementing more volunteer programs which assist first responders. CERT (Community Emergency Response Teams) is advocated by a representative who has seen great improvement in emergency preparedness through the program.
 - See attached handout: "What is CERT?" for more information.
 - Long-term goal: an "Emergency Club" at the Dryden Schools, encouraging students to recognize the potential for a career in uniformed services.
- **Need has been identified for more local government involvement in meetings, during planning, and assisting implementation of ideas.**

Highlights:

- Held a brief overview of the Incident Command System on November 17, 2004.
 - Goal: aid in understanding our role in relation to first responders' roles.
- An AmeriCorps member in service to the Red Cross is attempting to compile a local resource list for distribution to the group; this list would aid communication in an emergency.
- Building relationships between key players. For example, TC3 held Red Cross shelter training courses on October 11 and 12, 2004. Students included TC3 staff, Red Cross volunteers, local clergy, and a representative from the Kitchen Cupboard.

What is CERT? Brief Clarification of this program is shown as:

I. CERT is a group of trained citizens who recognize a potential problem before, during or after an emergency event happens.

II. Who makes up this group?

Ages range from youth to senior citizens that come to a neutral location for training.

III. Will these people respond to our emergencies?

No. They are trained to recognize, react and act as a pre-responder to an emergency. For example, they will report an emergency event...say a fire, but due to the dangers they are trained not to enter the structure. They will ensure that they can direct trucks to the location and gather information concerning details about the fire and number of people inside.

IV. Why is the training important to Dryden Ambulance and Neptune Hose Co. # 1? CERT adds an import dimension to our community.

1. Citizens are trained to 7 disciplines (disaster awareness, fire suppression, medical 1 & 2, search and rescue, disaster / team psychology and terrorism. This training is accomplished at the department. During the training they look at what we do and we have an opportunity to see who would become a potential future volunteer.
2. As the CERT trained citizens enter various locations in our community, the value and enthusiasm of their training will spread in the papers, organizations, businesses and associations. This is a moment where we receive an extreme amount of positive worth in the community.
3. It has been proven that 1 out of 10 CERT graduates will consider advanced emergency training. They also bring replacement citizens for training. This increases the number of trained citizen responders for Dryden.

V. Liability for Dryden Ambulance and Neptune Hose. We are a training location. The citizens sign a waiver of liability while training is performed. They are NOT members of our organization.