



CERT Volunteer

In brief: The Warren County CERT team is comprised of volunteers from a variety of backgrounds who have the desire to help their community in time of emergency or disaster by providing basic services that first responders would normally provide. This could include checking with neighbors and friends in a time of crisis, supporting local emergency responses, sharing information with the community, or managing crowds and traffic. If that describes you, contact the Warren County Fire and Rescue Department today.

The reality: During the 65 year period between January 1, 1956 and April 1, 2020, Virginia has declared a state of emergency 68 times. Warren County has been included in those declarations 21 times, or almost 31% of the time. The majority of these declarations have been for weather-related emergencies (i.e., 8 declarations for hurricane, 8 for severe storms/flooding, 1 for fire, 1 for the 9/11 terrorist attack, 1 for the 1996 blizzard, and 2 for the Covid-19 pandemic).

Since over 40,000 people reside in the 213 square mile area that makes up Warren County, being prepared when an emergency arises is no small feat. The Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) is comprised of volunteers who play a vital role in Warren County's Emergency Management strategy. They serve with the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) or the Emergency Communications (Emcomm) operation (see separate description).

Commitment: Volunteers should commit to being at all trainings and exercises, and seek to improve skills through online training experiences when they are presented. CERT volunteers are also expected to serve in their volunteer roles with the EOC during emergency events.

Training: Check the [events tab](#) on this website to find training opportunities.

Judgment: CERT volunteers must be able to make reasonable decisions for the community. They think through challenges logically, and seek to address problems proactively. They learn from their own, and others', past mistakes.

Teamwork: CERT volunteers put the overall mission ahead of their personal interests and strive to work well with others. They demonstrate their support for fellow volunteers and dedicated staff by acting respectfully when differences of opinion or past experiences are present.

Communication: Effective CERT Volunteers recognize that tone of voice, body language and what is written affect individuals differently. Therefore, they communicate in clear, concise ways, remaining positive in all aspects of communication.

Empathy: Responds to others appropriately, respectfully and helpfully, while remaining calm, compassionate and competent.

Concern for the community: CERT Volunteers are willing to serve and protect others , while showing sensitivity towards every citizen in need.

Concern for self: CERT Volunteers also know how to protect themselves from infectious diseases and take precautions to reduce injuries and exposures if serving on a specific disaster emergency scene. Care is given to decontamination when exposed to contagions, toxic spills or fires. Beyond these risks, CERT Volunteers must care for their emotional and psychological wellbeing and recognize how to intervene when symptoms of Post Traumatic Stress Disease (PTSD) first appear.