<u>Public Service Announcement</u>

Township of Wyckoff

For Immediate Release

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For further information contact

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TOWNSHIP OF WYCKOFF IS LOOKING FOR
EMERGENCY VOLUNTEERS

The Township of Wyckoff adopted a resolution in 2009 to authorize the formation of a <u>C</u>ommunity <u>E</u>mergency <u>R</u>esponse <u>T</u>eam, (known as a CERT).

<u>CERT – What is it?</u>

The **CERT** program helps train people to be better prepared to respond to emergency situations in their communities. When emergencies happen, CERT members can give critical support to first responders, provide immediate assistance to victims and organize spontaneous volunteers at a disaster site. CERT members can also help with the non-emergency projects that help improve the safety of the community. CERT is a nationwide initiative.

The events of September 11 will never be forgotten; also not forgotten is how the spirit of America was awakened that day and citizens came forth to volunteer their services. President George W. Bush harnessed this spirit of volunteerism with the Citizen Corps Program. CERT is a part of the Citizen Corps Program.

Wyckoff Emergency Management Coordinator, Police Lieutenant Charles Van Dyk is looking for residents who are interested in protecting themselves and their families during emergencies, and who want to become involved in planning and preparing for potential threats from natural disasters or acts of terrorism, to become part of the Township's Community Emergency Response Team.

What would CERT's do?

In an emergency, CERT members might assist with the evacuation of schools, help with shelter operations and the disbursement of medications during a bioterrorism incident, aid the Ambulance Corps during a mass casualty incident or help law enforcement with traffic control.

Are CERT's trained?

Absolutely, to be a volunteer CERT, one must attend and successfully complete a CERT training course. The Bergen County Law and Public Safety Complex located at 215 Campgaw Road, Mahwah provides the training course. The course lasts eight successive evenings. The classes are usually held from 7 to 9 pm and there is no cost to those who attend this course.

The course provides interested residents with basic training in first aid and what to do before, during and after a disaster. Training consists of about 16 hours of instruction provided by emergency responders, including firefighters and emergency medical and law enforcement personnel from the community. Topics will include disaster preparedness, fire suppression, medical operations, and psychology; light search and rescue operation; team organization and terrorism. Participants will learn about the types of hazards most likely to affect their homes and communities, their role in an immediate response and how to identify and reduce potential fire hazards in their homes and workplaces. They will work as a team to apply basic fire suppression strategies; resources and safety measures to extinguish a burning liquid.

They will learn to apply techniques for opening airways, control bleeding and treating shock. They will also employ basic treatments for various wounds and learn common techniques for searching a building and how to use safe techniques for debris removal and victim extrication.

Are there any requirements other than successfully completing the CERT training course?

Yes, to become a CERT member, a person must be at least 18 years of age and must possess a valid driver's license. Once the training course is successfully completed, CERT personnel will receive a certificate and a 'Ready Bag' that contains a helmet, reflective vest, gloves and a flashlight. Classes are provided throughout the year. If you are interested in attending, please contact Lt. Charles Van Dyk at 201-891-2121 or by emailing cvandyk@wyckoffpolice.org to obtain an application.

For more information about CERT you can check the following website: http://www.citizencorps.gov/cert/index.shtm

CERT.psa