Continuity IQ from DSPN

Fast Facts for Our Valued Friends and Clients

Here are some bullets and brain teasers about current events from your friends at DSPN. In this issue, we feature Community Emergency Response Team training. If you'd like to forward this message to your colleagues, just click the "Forward Email" link at the bottom of this page.

Fast Facts about CERT Training

Did you know....

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

2. NFPA 1600, the rapidly-spreading standard for business continuity programs, emphasizes emergency response in Section 5.10.2. Here's the mandate in that standard: "The safety, health, and welfare of people, and the protection of property and the environment under the jurisdiction of the entity shall be addressed."

3. The Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Program is a national program that provides training about basic disaster response skills, such as fire safety, light search and rescue, team organization, and disaster medical operations. In the public sector, this training is usually delivered in 2.5 hour sessions, one evening a week over a 7 week period.

4. The Community Emergency Response Team concept was developed and implemented by the Los Angeles City Fire Department in 1985. Since 1993 when this training was made available nationally by FEMA, communities in 28 States and Puerto Rico have conducted CERT training.

5. Over 1100 communities have listed their training programs on the CERT web site under the Directory of CERT Programs by State.

6. In the private sector, many companies elect to purchase CERT training from specialized companies who can tailor the curriculum for special needs and schedule the training at more convenient times. Two examples of such companies are Life Goes On and Borden/Lee Consulting.

7. The primary reason for CERT training is to give the your entity the decision-making, organizational, and practical skills to offer immediate assistance to employees while waiting for help. While people will respond to others in need without the training, the goal of the CERT program is to help people do so effectively and efficiently without placing themselves in unnecessary danger.

8. Some employers have devised perks to recognize CERT volunteer efforts. Examples: photo ID cards for training graduates, FEMA certificates of completion, hard hats and vests.
9. When employees have completed CERT training, it is important to keep them involved and practiced in their skills. Trainers should offer periodic refresher sessions to reinforce the basic training. Also, CERT teams can sponsor events such as drills, picnics, neighborhood clean up, and disaster education fairs which will keep them involved and trained.
10. A good way to provide refresher training for your CERT teams is to stage an event that includes a skills competition.

Brain Teasers

True or False:

1. A Federal law passed in 1997 protects volunteers from liability for their actions if the volunteers were properly certified and authorized to perform their activities.
2. All members of a CERT team must be able-bodied adults.
3. Employees are generally reluctant to volunteer for CERT because of liability concerns.
4. CERT is a national program sponsored by FEMA and Citizencorps.
5. CERT training can be accomplished in a reasonable number of hours.

Check your answers here...

Answers to the above questions:

1. True. The [Volunteer" Protection Act of 1997](#) is also known as the "Good Samitan Act".
2. False. CERT is for employees of any age and physical ability. Following a disaster, CERT members are needed for documentation, comforting others, logistics, etc. Non-disaster related team activities may include keeping databases, developing a website, writing a newsletter, planning activities, helping with special events and organizing exercises and activities.
3. False. Most employees welcome the training because the skills are useful if a disaster occurs during work hours but also for everyday life events that can happen at home.
4. True. As of January 2004, 50 states, three territories and six foreign countries are using CERT training.
5. True. Most CERT members receive 17.5 hours of initial training.

Readiness Check

Hard-to-remember details:

1. Does your emergency response plan recognize that first responders may not be immediately available should a regional disaster occur?
2. Do you have teams in each building who are trained on fire safety, light search and rescue, team organization, and disaster medical operations?
3. Have you identified appropriate training resources for life safety in your program?

4. Do you provide perks to recognize emergency response volunteer efforts?
5. Are you prepared to discuss liability concerns with CERT training candidates, should the question arise?

New From DSPN

Check these out on our website:

1. DSPN is offering 3 business continuity workshops in Irvine November 14-16.
2. DSPN's Free Resources Page now has Homeland Security's Ready Business Brochure.
3. A newsletter archive will be added to our website soon.

Contributors to This Issue

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Comments and Contributions

Tell us what you think...

Thanks to all of you who have sent us comments about this mailing.

In responding to recent incidents, did you discover an interesting detail that you would like to share? If so, send it along and we'll consider it for a future issue. If you want us to print a comment or submission about your company, be sure to give us permission when you write.

Paul

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