



Volume 1, Issue 1

The CERT Team EFFORT



January 1, 2015

Teton County, WY Community Emergency Response Team News & More

UPCOMING :

Jan. 15— First 2015 meeting of the Local Emergency Planning Committee, 8:30 a.m., Fire Station 1.

Jan. 21— CERT monthly meeting: "Tools for Leadership Success, Pt. 1," 6-8 p.m.

Feb. 18— CERT monthly meeting: "Tools for Leadership Success," Pt. 2," 6-8 p.m.

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CERT Volunteers Rush to Aid Of AmeriGas Blast Responders

In November, several Jackson Hole firefighters, EMTs, and other first responders were gathered in the Emergency Operations Center in Adams Canyon, planning how they would battle a huge propane tank explosion and the resultant fires at the AmeriGas facility on Gregory Lane.

Only minutes later, most of those responders were involved in that same "real world" scenario, applying many of the tactics that they had just detailed and discussed.

Shortly before 1 p.m., on November 20, one of the largest and loudest explosions in Teton County history sent a broiling ball of flaming propane high into the sky over AmeriGas. In mere minutes, a dense black cloud lay over High School Road, from the western leg of South Park Loop to Highway 89. The flashing fires and strong shock waves

destroyed three large buildings, several vehicles, and damaged a Pathways bike bridge—and nearly took the lives of several unsuspecting patrons at nearby Bell Fitness center.

The early afternoon incident gave CERT volunteers an opportunity to prove just how valuable their assistance can be to professional first responders. At the request of Teton County Fire Marshal Kathy Clay, who was the Incident Commander, almost a dozen CERT members quickly responded to a Nixle message callout from Rich Ochs, Emergency Management Coordinator. Despite subfreezing temperatures and bone-chilling winds, they set up a "rehabilitation" station in Smith's parking lot for resting firefighters, and maintained those services for the next four hours.

At the EOC, CERT member David "Huck" Henneberry also aided officials in providing support and administrative functions to responders.

One CERT volunteer was sooner at the scene of the explosive incident than she had planned. Ingrid Watsabaugh was in Smith's Food Plaza when she heard and felt the first shock wave, but thought it was only ski patrolters "blowing the mountain" with cannon to mitigate the potential for avalanches.

"When we saw the ball of fire," Watsabaugh said, "we all started running for our lives."

Besides Smith's, other area businesses were evacuated of both patrons and employees, along with residents of

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HEY! WHAT'S THIS ALL ABOUT?

Welcome to the first issue of a quarterly newsletter published by and for all members of the Teton County Community Emergency Response Team (CERT).

With YOUR help, the *Effort* can become a valuable resource to those individuals who volunteer their time and effort to help us all prepare for a potential disaster—or to recover

from one that has occurred. We will also announce upcoming training sessions, feature stories and photos of (and by) local CERT members in action, present various tips and tricks for responding to emergencies, and even welcome contributions from guest "columnists."

This issue was edited by CERT Team Leader (and unofficial photographer) Fred Whissel,

with help from Kent Nichols, Mary Lou Klene, and John Sharsmith.

If YOU would like to join our fledgling staff, simply email Rich Ochs, Teton County's Emergency Management Coordinator at rochs@tetonwyo.org or fredwhissel@bresnan.net. No experience in newspaper journalism is required—just a desire to learn and have fun.

CERT TRAINERS USE "BULLEX" SYSTEM TO TEACH THE INS AND OUTS OF FIRES

Over the past couple of years, CERT teams have taught literally hundreds of other individuals a bit more than they ever thought they would need to know about common fires:

- What starts them up
- What keeps them going
- How to put them out, and
- How to remain safe while fighting them.

It's all part of a program in which propane-fueled fires

are put out with water-and-air filled fire extinguishers.

The relatively inexpensive system is called the BullEx Intelligent Training System. It's easy to learn, easy to teach, and closely simulates the use of common ABC fire extinguishers in putting out trash can-sized fires. With various optional accessories, the BullEx system can even simulate motor fires and flaming grease pots on camp stoves and kitchen ranges.

This year, CERT's BullEx trainers ran more than 200 per-

sons through the training, including 127 Grand Teton National Park employees (in less than three hours!), more than 30 employees and volunteers at the National Museum of Wildlife Art, about the same number at the county fair, and around 50 shoppers and store employees at K-Mart's annual Safety Day. Some BullEx photos are below.

If you know of any groups or organizations who might want CERT to bring this FREE training to them in 2015, ask

them to contact Rich Ochs for scheduling.

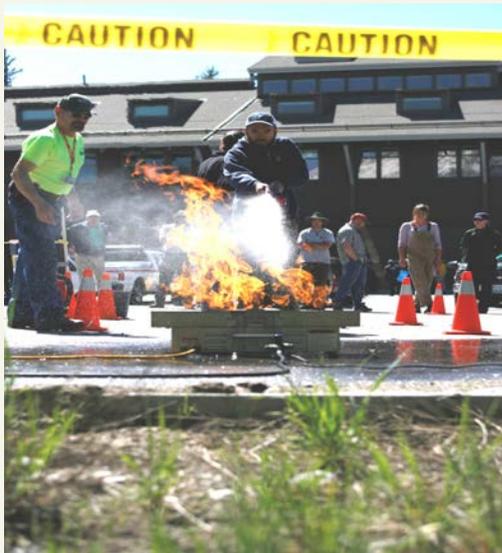
CERT Members Managed To Attend Highway Patrol Training In...Well...Droves

If you ever had the urge to manage a traffic incident, you should have joined more than a dozen CERT volunteers in October who attended a "Traffic Incident Management" (TIM) class at the EOC.

Among other things, the course covered different philosophies for assuming command upon arrival—not always according to what is taught in the National Incident Command System.



GTNP Photos by Alicia Whissel (CERT)



NATIONAL OFFICE IS CERTAIN ITS NEW PUBLICATION WILL BE A WINNER

If at first you don't succeed, you try, try, and try again. (Harder.)

That seems to be what the national CERT organization in Washington, D. C. has done—at least insofar as its efforts to communicate with CERT's hundreds of lower-jurisdiction teams throughout the country.

The national office has completely revised its own periodic newsletter—to better serve and inform us, we hope. After a recent re-design, re-tooling, and re-thinking, our federal-level CERT

friends have come up with a monthly "e-brief." The first issue in the new format appeared in July.

If YOU have a story that you think might be of interest to other CERT units, or even just a suggestion for how to better inform us all, we're CERTain that the national office would like to hear from you. Check them out at FEMA.gov, and sign up for emailed issues of the new 'e-brief.' But don't forget US—because we'd like to hear from you, too! Just contact Rich Ochs,

Teton County Emergency Management



Is our CERT Program 'going to the dogs'? This pooch is David "Huck" Henneberry's best pal.

FEMA ON-LINE COURSES ALLOW STUDENTS TO SET THEIR OWN STUDY PACE AND PLACE

If you have never checked out the dozens of on-line course offerings from FEMA, you may be shorting both yourself and others.

These self-paced courses of study present an excellent opportunity for all CERT volunteers to improve their understanding of such concepts as the Incident Command System, the role of various social media in emergency management, fundamentals of emergency

management, the functions and daily management of emergency operation centers (such as Teton County's), and even basic decision-making and problem-solving. Many of the FEMA courses, under its Independent Study Program, even allow students to earn "Continuing Education Units" from Frederick Community College. A complete listing of FEMA's on-line course offerings may be viewed at FEMA.gov.,

along

With instructions for completing them at your own pace and for printing out a certificate of completion for each course, some of which can be finished in only minutes, others consuming up to several hours. For those who are REALLY interested in improving themselves, FEMA also runs an Emergency Manage-

paid, on-campus study. Information on those courses, along with enrollment details, may be found at FEMA.gov. Effort editor Fred Whissel has been accepted for two EMI classes in February: "CERT Train-the-Trainer" and "CERT Program Manager," which will run back-to-back over five days. See Rich Ochs for further details if you are interested in applying—at least two months in advance to secure the necessary local, state, and federal approval.

EOC STAFFERS JOIN REAL-WORLD MANAGERS IN FOUR-COUNTY PLANE CRASH EXERCISE

Several CERT volunteers have been adding to their Incident Command System knowledge and skills by serving Teton County as staff members of the Emergency Operations Center.

In an actual emergency situation, it is very likely that many of them will be called to assist local officeholders and various other emergency-response officials at the EOC by manning phones,

taking and running messages, and making their jobs easier in several other ways.

Last May, the EOC staffers got a much better feel for real operations when they played various roles in "Operation Grizzly," an exercise that involved real-world managers in Sublette, Sweetwater, and Lincoln Counties. The exercise was based upon the crash of a plane flying from Jackson to Denver—but soon involved a second plane crash, SAR

efforts in wilderness areas—and even a bear attack upon rescuers. (It was very, very realistic!)

If you would like to take part in similar EOC adventures, contact Rich Ochs at 732-8594 about joining his staff.



BITS AND PIECES AND BITS AND PIECES AND BITS AND PIECES AND BITS...

National Preparedness Month

Need some extra incentive to join another group or two of volunteers, like the local Red Cross, the Search and Rescue Team, or the Howdy Pardners?

That's probably true of all of us—sometimes—but you don't have to wait for National Preparedness Month (in September) to maybe just re-think the way you have all of your CERT stuff stuffed into that great bag, or maybe come up with that home emergency escape plan that you've been putting off, or even...the possibilities are endless.

The key is to just get out there and do only one more thing than you would have done without that extra incentive. Call it your personal 5-Hr Energy Boost—on 24/7 steroids!

The Little Hillside That Budged

Several CERT volunteers were quick to help town and county crews protect the public from potential danger last June, when the Budge Drive hillside stepped up a long, slow slide. Not only did CERT members help out with traffic control and posting caution tape, but also helped to set up and man a Red Cross information center at the Teton County Library

and a temporary shelter at the fair grounds for some of the individuals affected.



CERT volunteer Karen Stewart stands tall on the Budge Drive slide caution tape line last April.

How to Save Every Second

Most CERT volunteers soon realize how critical it is to save every second when applying first-aid. A good way to do that is to pack separate "zippered" bags for particular uses, so that no time is lost in looking through items that you don't even need. An illustrated article on packing your CERT bag has been uploaded to the "Documents" folder on Mission Manager. (It even includes a perfect way to carry those rolls of victim classification tape that are so cumbersome.)

YOUR MISSION: Take Part in at Least One CERT Activity Each Calendar Year

What happens after you go through your CERT training, receive that certificate of completion to hang on your wall, and feel pretty confident about being able to save the whole world in case of an emergency?

Hopefully, you continue taking part in CERT training exercises, meetings, and call-outs. After all, didn't you put in all of that study effort to be able to use it for the benefit of both yourself and your community?

Maybe not. There are now over 200 CERT classroom graduates, but fewer than 20 of them routinely show up for a CERT activity.

What difference does it make? Well, it does seem like a waste of both time and effort—unless you plan to put your training to good use at some point in the future. But now there is another good reason to show up for at least one CERT meeting, call-out, or other event during any 12-month period: to have continued access to Mission Manager.

Mission Manager is our key CERT on-line program that allows us to post Calendar items, issue call-out notices, maintain each member's complete profile and contact info, keep time records, and store various web links and CERT documents.

Until now, Mission Manager has been a free program. But recently the creators of the Mission Manager program decided to start charging for it. The fee will be based upon the number of active users in any organization.

What that means to Teton County's CERT program managers is the need to pay dollars that just can't be justified by the usually low number of "active" CERT members, versus the "inactive" ones, even with a program discount that its creators have offered to the county.

Each year, all local members will be advised of the MM situation, and notified that those who don't go to at least one CERT event over the next year will be



CERT members receive a rundown on a well-equipped Teton County Search & Rescue unit.

placed in "Inactive" status—meaning they will no longer be able to take advantage of any of program features, such as event sign-up and call-out notification. (However, they will continue to be listed for record-keeping purposes.) Mission Manager is also changing the way it emails users. If you have had any problems receiving CERT emails in the past, please notify Rich and he will send you a test message to see if it will go through now.

The Teton County Emergency Response Team (CERT) is guided and primarily supported by the Teton County Citizen Corps Council.



THE CERT Team EFFORT is a quarterly publication of Teton County Emergency Management, 3240 S. Adams Canyon Dr., Jackson, WY 83001. To comment, or to contact us for any other reason, please email us at em@tetonwyo.org.

County Seeks (and Finds!) 'Safe Haven' in Annual Exercise

Teton County's disaster response community went up against a would-be terrorist in September, and walked away with another shut-out: Home Team 1, Terrorist 0.

It was the annual Multi-Jurisdictional Exercise for local law enforcement, firefighters, medical and health personnel, and other emergency responders, who one day might need to employ the same skills they simulated during several days of searching for, finding, and defusing a disgruntled individual, who turned out to be more of a threat than a promise of revenge, extortion, and all of those other anti-social activities that bond good guys and bad guys.

Several members of the county's Community Emergency Response Team also joined in the game, acting out various roles as the terrorist's "victims." Some had to show

signs of "smoke" inhalation, others suffered "broken bones" and "burns," while still others sported amazingly realistic "wounds." No members of the public were injured (nor were any of the exercise participants).

The exercise, "Operation Safe Haven," began when local law enforcement officers got wind of a man who was suspected of stealing assorted engineering equipment that uses radioactive materials and secreting them in local storage units. When the Federal Bureau of Investigation (really!) was invited to the party, it was soon determined that the man intended to try and irradiate people near the Jackson Hole Rodeo grounds, where a "world championship event" (then under way) would allow him to contaminate hundreds—as a protest against the finan-

cial policies formed by the big-wigs at another local gathering.

Yada-yada-yada, and nearly everybody and his brother came to town to catch the thief, find his toys, and put him behind bars including the Civil Support Teams from Wyoming (84th) and Colorado (8th) (both specializing in radioactive threats), Wyoming's Office of Homeland Security, the FBI's Denver Office, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Domestic Nuclear Detection Office, Teton and Sublette County Emergency Management and Public Health offices, Grand Teton National Park, the National Elk Refuge, Jackson Police, Fire/EMS and Sheriff's Office, Jackson Hole Airport, the Teton County Public Information Officer Group, and CERT.

To make a long story shorter, it can be revealed that most of

the hidden radioactive materials were found after a pre-arranged search of "tainted" bays at the Storage Stables, which caused the thwarted terrorist to attempt to flee on the next, early morning flight at JAC. When his plane was forced to return for de-boarding, he became suspicious, and lit a fire to create confusion and allow him to escape, but a sharp-eyed officer soon spotted the fleeing non-flyer and he was forced to surrender. After a ramp triage, a representative group of the "injured" were taken to St. John's Medical Center.

Among the 23 "victims" were CERT members Annie Mostkoff, Arne Johanson, Cynthia Riedel, David Henneberry, Dennis Jones, Karen Stewart, Monique Gustin, Pat Snyder, and Sylvia Raumer.



St. John's Medical Center 'Safe Haven' Photos by Lori Iverson, National Elk Refuge PIO

CERT Volunteers Rush to Aid...

(Continued from Page 1)

nearby apartments. Students and teachers at Jackson Hole High School, the Middle School, and Summit School were ordered to "shelter in place" while those at Jackson Hole Community School were evacuated. Traffic in the AmeriGas area was detoured until mid-morning the next day.

It took local firefighters just over an hour to contain the flames, although crews worked until 6 p.m. to extinguish any "hot spots" that could re-ignite the fires. About an hour later they were holding an "after-action" session, talking about all of the things that had gone

right and almost nothing that had gone wrong. (Not a single person was injured.)

So many CERT volunteers showed up at Smith's parking lot that some had to be turned away, while the others set up tables and chairs, filled urns with water for coffee and cocoa, cranked up a portable generator for power, and even borrowed three propane-fired outdoor heaters from Teton Rentals to keep firefighting teams warm while on break. They served donated coffee from Teton Roasters, two dozen pizzas from Dominos, and cookies, pretzels, and "Gold-

fish" that were provided by CERT members Lori and Ken Corcilius (who run an area food service route). Some of the snacks were shuttled to the Jackson Police officers who were directing traffic on Highway 89.

The responding CERT volunteers were Ron Davison, Chris and Krystine Kendzierski, Mary Lou Klene, Pat Snyder, Lori Corcilius, Kent Nichols, Alicia Whissel, Nancy Berlin, Ingrid Watsabaugh, and Fred Whissel, who served as Team Leader.

Ochs said he received several kudos from the firefighters,

praising the professionalism, performance, and heartiness of the CERT volunteers in the field, who followed the Incident Command System and CERT procedures precisely as they had been trained. All of the CERT team volunteers reported to Whissel, who reported to Ray Brence (his JHFD/EMS supervisor), who reported to Clay. Thus, while Ochs would normally oversee the CERT volunteers—as their coordinator—in this incident he was both physically and functionally prevented from doing so.

GIMME' SHELTER!

Every year, Teton County CERT volunteers get together for a summer picnic, and every year they try to learn something new and useful by working in some sort of training.

This year's picnic—held in August—involved one of CERT's most novel training exercises yet. In conjunction with local American Red Cross (ARC) volunteers, and observed by representatives of the Teton County Disaster Animal Response Team (DART), CERT members played various roles in setting up a semi-working disaster shelter.

Over a three-hour period, Snow King Resort's Lodge Room was posted with ARC signage, set up with cots and registration tables, and divided into a play area, canteen, info desk, and sleeping quarters, making it look and feel very much like an actual shelter.

While some CERT members served on the shelter staff, others became "clients," who were processed pretty much like they would be in a real disaster (except for the water and granola bars that were substituted for meals with a bit more substance). Local Red Cross managers worked to keep everything running as realistically as possible.

"It's simulations such as this that, hopefully, will prepare



Teton County members of the American Red Cross and CERT work out mock shelter registration problems at Snow King's Lodge Room.

both ARC and CERT volunteers to perform very well during an actual disaster," said Rich Ochs, Teton County's Emergency Management Coordinator. His hopes were shared by CERT members who hoped, in an actual emergency, they might be called upon to play again—this time "for real."

Are YOU Prepared to Survive—On Your Own—For at Least 72 Hours? With THIS Kit, You Can!

BY JOHN SHARSMITH, TC CERT

Jackson Hole is living proof that geology is active, although no major movement has been recorded in human history. However, the stress continues to increase, suggesting that the next major movement could be very strong and very destructive. With only four roads into the valley, Jackson Hole is isolated—and even those routes could be closed by avalanche or landslide. If the Jackson Airport runway is also seriously damaged, you should be prepared to survive ON YOUR OWN for at least 72 hours—more in outlying areas. In a worst-case scenario, such as a January night with below-zero temperatures, you might have a family to care for with a destroyed home (perhaps burned), and maybe injuries to care for. You might not have any potable water, power, or heat—and your neighbors might be even worse off than you. In such a case, the odds are against your surviving. But if you keep your wits about you, and have prepared in advance to meet your needs for food, water, heat, and emotional well-being, you just might.

We should ALL have an emergency kit in our vehicle, which should be able to provide shelter for at least one night. Have a sleeping bag? If it is not warm enough, put one inside another—and even a "mummy bag" should accommodate two people. (If you throw in a cat or dog, you will be even warmer: their body temperature is normally 2-4 degrees higher than ours.) Always keep your gas tank at least half-full, but balance running the engine against the need for future transportation. Your water will likely be frozen, but keep some candles and matches for heat and illumination in your vehicle. (Buy "Strike Anywhere" matches, instead of "Breaks Apart on the Box and Won't Light" ones.) Every morning, assess your situation for priorities, problems, and assets. You should have an emergency cache of supplies to augment your car—but don't locate it in the basement of your burned home. A tent provides both shelter and emotional security, protection from falling snow, and an envelope of warm air. You will get really wet building a snow cave, and will stay wet and cold—insulate your clothes and beds

from snow. Try to build something from the materials salvaged from your home. For that you will need tools, and clothes: snow shovel, tarps, rope, hammer, hand saw, pry bar, hack saw, duct tape, knife, pliers, etc. Your cooking gear should include a large pot for melting snow, and your clothes should be good for both standing around and working. You might want a notebook, for a journal to help organize your thoughts. Common cooking gear is essential, along with simple and quickly prepared foods that are packed with nutrition. (Candy bars not only make you feel good, but quickly restore blood sugar levels.) Don't forget plenty of hot drinks and canned goods (with opener!)—try buying dented goods at your local grocery to save money. Make sure to have a bear-proof container, such as a 55-gallon drum with bolt-on ring (about \$25.) You will need a pile of wood, a grate, and cinder blocks to set your pots on. Maintain your health by using hand-sanitizer, water purification tablets, and a first-aid kit. You might want to check out "The Preparedness Store," 1220 Northgate Mall, in Idaho Falls for many of these items—it's an awesome place. But whatever you do, BE PREPARED!

For CERT's 'Safe Haven' Actors, JAC Was Just Plane 'Show Biz'

Although most of the 'action' in this year's Teton County Full-Scale Exercise may have taken place at various locations in town, most of the acting was "scene" at Jackson Hole Airport, where some 30 "victims" of a would-be terrorist suffered through a non-toxic attack

on an out-of-service S.T.A.R.T. bus. (Hey, this IS Hollywood *West*.) Oh well, nobody received any Academy Award nominations for their performance, but several of them got a pocketful of Best Pictures! Read the full story on Page 5. (Film at 11.)



All Photos by Fred Whissel (CERT) Official "Safe Haven" Photographer