

## TWO THINGS YOU CAN LEARN THAT CAN SAVE YOUR LIFE – CERT TRAINING AND 2-WAY RADIO

**KNOWLEDGE IS POWER.** *Some knowledge can keep you from being a victim of crime. Other knowledge can help you and your family survive something unexpected that could become much worse if you don't know what to do. It could be a matter of life and death. Today's newsletter is dedicated to helping you understand how useful two things are to have available to you on a daily basis and how easy it is for you to add them to your usable resources for the rest of your life. Please take time to read this material and see how easy it is to have this living insurance of knowledge and skills for yourself and your family. The two things are CERT training and using a 2-way radio.*

**CERT STANDS FOR COMMUNITY EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM, BUT THE FIRST PLACE YOU MAY USE THE TRAINING IS FOR YOURSELF AND YOUR FAMILY**

**CERT Course Content includes the following:**

**Earthquake Awareness and Preparedness –**

- If your furniture is secured so it doesn't fall in an earthquake, it is also less likely to fall on a child who might be pulling on it.
- If you have a Grab and Go bag prepared for each family member and pet in case you need to evacuate in an earthquake, you are also ready if you have to leave your home because a pipe breaks or you decide to go camping on a moment's notice.

**Disaster Fire Suppression, also Hazardous Materials –**

- Have you ever had a stove fire?
- Do you have fire extinguishers in your home?
- Do you have the proper fire extinguisher in your vehicle, because it is not the same as the one you have in the house?
- Do you really know how to use a fire extinguisher?
- In this class you actually get to **USE** a fire extinguisher and know you can do it properly if you need to do so.
- You also learn about the hazardous materials you already have in your home and what precautions you should take to prevent a disaster while using them.

**Disaster Medical Operations –**

- If someone you are with gets hurt, you are the first responder.
- Recognizing and treating life threatening injuries until more help arrives may involve your children and their friends.
- It may involve friends who are camping with you.
- It may involve people you don't know if you witness a car accident.

**Team Organization and Management –**

- This will prepare you to organize a response to a problem wherever you are, at home or on vacation.
- Understanding how the city or area incident command system is set up will help you get help if you need it.

**Light Search and Rescue –** In addition to keeping yourself safe while looking for someone, you learn how to safely get someone out if they are stuck under something.

**Disaster Psychology (Emotional First Aid for Victims and CERT)** is a resource tool any mom or dad might use.

**Terrorism Awareness** is information we all should have in this current age.

Read the rest of the information about all you can do **IF YOU WANT TO**. Some of the opportunities are really fun and when you can serve it is much needed. CERT is a **VOLUNTEER** organization and even if you are asked to help, you are not **REQUIRED** to go if you do not want to. Your family and your job come first. Monthly meetings are interesting and informative, but they are optional and you are not required to attend.

Please do not be afraid to take CERT training, because you don't know what will happen in your future. Get the free knowledge now that will help you forever and take the future one day at a time.

## **THERE IS ROOM FOR MORE STUDENTS IN THE FREE CERT BASIC TRAINING CLASSES**

**We need more CERT grads in our city to help their neighborhoods get organized and to help throughout the city on response activities. Anything and everything you can do to fill the CERT classes counts toward saving lives and helping make survival easier in a major emergency. Help CERT Coordinator, Brenda Emrick, fill her classes so we will all be safer. You might try printing out the attached application and the course explanation and handing both to your friends, emailing both to everyone you know, taking them to clubs and churches you belong to, talking to management at selected businesses and leaving them on counters (if people have time to go to the gym, they may have time to do CERT and it would be good exercise for them).**

**IF THE CURRENT CLASS DOES NOT FIT IN YOUR CALENDAR, WATCH FOR THE DATES OF THE NEXT CLASS. THERE ARE USUALLY 3 CLASSES A YEAR.**

## **WE NEED TO START USING 2-WAY RADIOS MORE – AT LEAST FRS/GMRS AND 2 METER IF YOU CAN**

**If** commercial radio is available, it is the fastest way to broadcast a message to the most people who just need to hear the message, but it usually regional instead of local.

After the recent Joplin, MO, disaster, people used 2-way radios to call for help and allow the rescuers using 2-way radios to find them. Others used 2-way radios to call and find out if the twister had passed and it was safe to come out.

With a system in place and everyone knowing to turn their radios on if there might be an emergency, Costa Mesa has already had incidents where 2-way radio allowed everyone who tuned in to report their local status and find out where the problems were in the city in just a few minutes. Part of MESAC's responsibility is to check in after earthquakes, severe weather and large power outages or unusual circumstances and do this.

Even though cell phones are widely used today, they only communicate between individual phones or a small number of phones. In a long power outage or if towers are down, they don't always work and in a disaster, response workers may be the only ones who can use the cell phone network.

2-way radios can reach anyone who is listening to the frequency used and is within transmission range. Even if you have cell phones available, 2-way radio is the fastest way to reach a large or small number of people who may need to individually respond. This is why you see 2-way radios of different kinds being used daily by everyone from police forces and fire depts. to commercial and volunteer security teams.

2-way radios are less expensive than cell phones to keep in touch with children at play, cars in a caravan and groups at events from sports to camping. They are easy to use by everyone from grammar school age children to senior citizens who do not like complicated technology.

**In 2004 City Administrators asked Paul and Diane Hill and Gordon West to develop the Neighborhood Safety and Preparedness Program (NSPP). As part of NSPP, Gordon designed the Monday Night Radio Training net, so there could be emergency communication in every neighborhood and across the city. This is the Monday night net we often mention as a reminder and encourage everyone to participate in.**

The more people who have such a system available to them, the safer we all will be. It only takes about a half hour. You can participate from anywhere you are in Costa Mesa. if we work together now to spread the system, it is available for emergency use that can bring help and even save lives. It is important to participate as frequently as possible. Participation is like your investment in the program, so it will be there when you need it.

## **DETAILS OF THE NET**

At the beginning of each part there is a place for announcements to be made. At 7:50 there is a ham operator check-in and assignment of relays and then at 8 PM the ham relays take turns calling for FRS operators by area, asking them a question, getting answers and then relaying the answers back to Net Control. Eventually, after the ham operators finish the relay work, they switch to simplex and check in on that frequency, so they know how to use simplex if they need to.

IF YOU LISTEN IN MONDAYS ON FRS/GMRS CHANNEL 4 FROM 8 PM TO 8:20 AND HEAR NOTHING, CALL 714 546-4252 FOR ASSISTANCE.

After trying several different days and times for the net, Monday was the most requested time. It is also most helpful to have the NSPP net shortly after the MESAC net, so some of the hams remain on the air and are able to monitor and help relay. Hams participating in the NSPP net can also listen to and participate in the MESAC net as visitors and hear more about what that organization is doing.

Names were used at first, but if the propagation was not strong and there was a little distance involved, it was very hard to understand the transmission and figure out who the operator was. After some experimentation, it was decided the call sign would start with a geographically assigned number and a phonetic letter. Another number would follow that was unique to the operator and then the person's name. With the receiving operator listening for a number, letter, number sequence and then the name, it was easier to figure out what was being transmitted. As those call signs were used wherever the operator was, it was the same as the person's name, but they never had to use a multi-syllable last name if they had been blessed with one.

**The [map](#) and [list](#) by area of operators and their names are posted on the [cmprepared.com](#) website, so anyone can find other operators nearby. If you want to do a radio check with someone, call 714 546-4252 for contact information.**

**To get a free FRS/GMRS Operator's ID for anyone old enough to properly use a radio, send the name, address and phone number to the email address in the signature. Please include your ham license if you have one.**

**Even if you are not physically able to lift sandbags – or move mountains of debris – you can talk. You can use a 2-way radio and should have one in case you need to save yourself in an emergency and there is no telephone service. Those 2-way radios are useless unless you know how to use them and be sure they are un-corroded, charged and functioning, with extra batteries. You do not know if they are working unless you use them. This is why we have radio practice nets. Please join or rejoin us and see how many neighbors you can talk to by radio.**

There is a whole section on radio on [cmprepared.com](#). You can read about the different radio levels and how to use a radio as well as other related information.

This net only takes about a half hour and it is interesting to see who you can hear. The more who participate, the more fun it is for everyone. The following factors are involved.

- A. FRS radios are designed to use within a half mile radius and are perfect for this purpose. They work well within a neighborhood or within an activity area. It is important they NOT REACH TOO FAR. Our 2-way radios use a public frequency and only one person can talk and be heard at a time. If your radio transmits over too wide an area it stops too much traffic as no one else can talk while you are talking. At the same time, if you are not close enough to another radio to hear what they are transmitting, you hear nothing and this is very discouraging. (GMRS radios are more powerful than FRS radios and can use an external antenna. You can read more about them at [cmprepared.](#))
- B. Ham radios have more power and can transmit further. When using the repeater on top of the police dept., a ham operator can transmit generally across our city. This makes it convenient as long as the repeater is working. In an emergency, you may not be able to use the repeater to carry your signal further. You may need to use the radio by itself, which is called simplex. You cannot communicate as far on simplex and may need relay operators to receive and send along the message across the city.
- C. Antennas on top of a home or even on top of a car carry a radio transmission further. They cannot always receive the transmission of a less powerful radio. This is an example from the Monday night net: 2Oscar 101 Don on Bay Street below Victoria makes FRS calls out that reach 2Charlie 2 Mike above the San Diego Fwy. 2Charlie 2 Mike answers, but his radio is not as strong and 2Oscar 101 Don cannot hear him. Someone must relay a message to 2Oscar 101 Don to let him know someone is calling in. 2Charlie 2 Mike needs to stay on frequency to hear the relay respond back to him that he has been heard.
- D. Number of people involved: the simplest net only involves ham operators using a repeater who do not care about being able to communicate in an emergency. This net can have as few or as many as happen to check in. As long as there is a reason for the net to exist, it is easy to keep it functioning. Add the need to have simplex communication to share emergency messages and an additional number of people need to be participating and relaying when needed. The desire to communicate with FRS operators requires a great many more people to be involved on a regular basis. It is also important for emergency preparedness net

participants to be on the net as frequently as possible so all can have a better idea of communication potential in an emergency.

- E. Atmospheric conditions are not the same every week, every day or even every hour. To be useful in an emergency, an operator needs to USE their radio to transmit frequently until they are CONFIDENT not just in talking on the radio, but in knowing the best transmission spot from their home base location in every direction and the general range possible when they are away from their home base. These conditions can change so much that someone whom you could hear clearly one day, can be barely understandable from the same location the next day. For this reason it is easier to determine who the caller is if their ID is simple and consistent. It is fine to use first names as long as there is only one person with that name. Otherwise the second person participating with the same name needs to use an additional identifier.
- F. Identifying who wants to participate and practicing with each other to find the best transmission location for each of you: this is especially important when you are using FRS radios. In our neighborhood, we found FRS radios by themselves could not reliably reach directly from Fairview to Harbor. In addition to net communications, we used phone checking to help each operator find their best transmission location. With an open telephone line between them, operators hold their phone in one hand and speak through the radio in the other hand and say, "CAN YOU HEAR ME NOW?" Yes, that is the real origin of that famous TV commercial..
- G. Helping participants remember when the net is and then continue to be interested in participating: the Red Cross and MESAC have nets based on being continually ready to respond to any emergency and sharing and gathering information. They are only working with ham radio operators who are more involved with radio than those who are just beginning to use FRS radios. Those who participate usually also participate in regular meetings and are in touch with each other by email and phone as well. A net, especially one that includes FRS operators is stronger if there is a net reminder email and often a net reminder call and even a follow-up call of encouragement and it works better if this support is on a neighborhood or area basis supplementing city-wide efforts.

**WE WILL BE LISTENING FOR YOU EVERY MONDAY NIGHT. SET YOUR ALARM CLOCK AND JOIN THE FUN.**

To remove your name from this list reply with your name, address and email address and "remove" as subject

## **UNITED NEIGHBORS**

**"Neighbors Helping Neighbors"**

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