

# Webster County CERT News

Webster County, Missouri



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This newsletter is intended to provide Webster County CERT members with current news and information and is not intended for public distribution.

## Webster CERT Volunteers Contribute 400 Hours to Joplin Response

On May 22, a historic F-5 tornado ripped through Joplin, claiming more than 150 lives and leaving a trail of utter devastation. In the hours immediately after the storm, Webster County CERT members waited anxiously for Joplin to request our assistance. While other people self-deployed to the scene, our members followed proper protocol, waiting for an official request. The wait seemed interminable, but the call finally came. Webster County CERT deployed to Joplin on Thursday, June 26<sup>th</sup>.

Just as we've practiced in our exercises, the first CERT team to go had two ARES members embedded to assist with communication. This model worked so well that in the following days, Webster County ARES members were also assigned to CERT teams from Christian and Greene Counties who were also helping with search and rescue.

For the next two weeks, CERT members from Webster County continued to respond to pleas for more assistance,

initially with search and rescue and then with debris removal. Our members also helped with donations management, and were specifically requested to manage the mobile showering trailer, and then train others on how to manage and maintain the trailer. In all, 11 Webster County CERT members responded to help with the Joplin response, contributing more than 400 hours.

These volunteer hours not only helped protect life and property in the days after the tornado, but they will also count against Joplin's match with FEMA. Volunteer time is credited at a rate of \$21.36 per hour. The more volunteer hours contributed to the response, the higher percentage FEMA pays for the disaster clean up. If Joplin earns enough volunteer (in kind) hours, FEMA may cover the total cost of recovery from the disaster – something that would help the city of Joplin tremendously! Your time DOES make a difference! ;

## Medical Surge Exercise Tests CERT Triage Skills

On June 7<sup>th</sup> CERT co-hosted a medical surge full-scale exercise with the Webster County Health Unit. The Office of Emergency Management and the Sheriff's Office also participated. The scenario was a dirty bomb explosion during an event at Marshfield High School at which CERT was helping with parking. Immediately CERT was asked to help with crowd control and then they took charge of the medical triage and treatment of approximately 30 "victims."

A debriefing after the exercise showed that the CERT team established command early and did a good job triaging the participants. The Greene County CERT team also participated, and the two counties worked fairly well together.

Gaps in communication and training were identified in the exercise. Although ARES (ham radio) were once again very

successfully utilized on the scene, very little communication took place between the incident scene and the Emergency Operations Center. Most of the training gaps identified can be tied back to the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and the Incident Command System (ICS).



CERT members and "victims" stage, ready to begin the exercise.

## Areas of Improvement Noted

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The span of control was not maintained with 5—7 responders per Team Leader. Teams should have been split and additional team leaders identified. The chain of command was not followed in some instances. Each person in a response has one person they report to in the chain of command, and that person should not be circumvented to report to someone else. CERT scope of work was exceeded several times with CERT people initiating CPR, searching for bombs and trying to secure violent people. Emergency lifts did not follow proper lifting protocol.

Despite identifying gaps, the exercise was a huge success. The very purpose of exercising is to identify gaps in training and resources so they can be corrected before an actual event. The exercise did just that. Look for these gaps to be addressed in upcoming quarterly meetings, training opportunities and additional exercises. †

## June and July Activations

The Webster County CERT program was requested to help with Community events five times within the span of just a few weeks in mid-June through early July. Members responded to each request, despite many having just returned from helping in Joplin.

June 15-19	Springfield Music and Arts Festival
June 25	Seymour 5K Walk/Run & 4 <sup>th</sup> of July Festival
June 29	Amish Vaccination Clinic
July 1 – 3	Marshfield Rodeo
July 4	Marshfield 4 <sup>th</sup> of July Parade

## New Contact Information

Changes have been made to the CERT phone lines. The only active phone number at this time is 417-830-1959. Please call this number for all CERT related business.

The CERT email remains [webstercert@yahoo.com](mailto:webstercert@yahoo.com). Webster CERT is also on Twitter and Facebook. †

Webster County CERT

A program of the Webster County Citizen Corps Council

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## Training and Participation Opps

Participation: Back to School Fair  
Aug 2, Marshfield

Training: Intermediate Incident Command System (ICS300)  
Sept 13-15, Branson

Training: FEMA launches new independent study classes that support the nine mission areas identified by the National Preparedness Goal. These include “Animals in Disasters: Community Planning” and “Exercising Continuity Plans for Pandemics.” Visit [www.http://training.fema.gov/IS](http://training.fema.gov/IS) for a complete list of classes.

Contact Jaci for details on participation opportunities. For details or to register, visit [www.webstercert.org](http://www.webstercert.org). †

## Watch for CERT Kids Day coming this fall!

## Quarterly Meeting — Dinner July 28th

The next CERT quarterly meeting will be held Thursday, July 28 at 6:30 pm at Sheila’s restaurant, on A Highway just south of Marshfield. CERT members’ spouses and children are invited to join us for a free dinner. Child care will be provided on site at no cost by professional providers.

In order to plan for enough meals and child care workers, please RSVP to Jaci by July 25th with the number of people in your household that will be attending, and the ages of the children that will need child care.

The agenda for the evening will be to recap the Joplin experience, discuss the medical surge exercise, and identify training gaps from both events. Bring your backpacks and wear comfortable clothes to get down in the floor and do a triage skills refresher. We’ll also review the CCP grant, upcoming classes, trainings and events, and what’s next for Webster County CERT.

I hope you’ll make every effort to attend! Remember, please RSVP by July 25th by calling Jaci at 830-1959 or by emailing [webstercert@yahoo.com](mailto:webstercert@yahoo.com). †

Next Basic CERT class starts July 30 in Marshfield. Sign up today by calling 417-830-1959 or by emailing Jaci at [webstercert@yahoo.com](mailto:webstercert@yahoo.com).