Community Emergency Response Team

- Personal safety is ALWAYS the number one priority
- Work as a team
- Wear personal protective equipment...gloves, helmet, goggles, N95 mask and boots (preferably with steel toe)

- The CERT goal is to do the Greatest Good for the Greatest Number

- Hope for the best but plan for the worst!

Tactical Command Structure

- This training unit describes the Tactical Command Structure for Disaster Response
  - This is called Integrated Command Structure (ICS) and it is defined by FEMA – Federal Emergency Management Agency
  - Many emergency responders use ICS as well
  - ICS is hierarchical with multiple levels of similar command structures at every level
  - Walnut Creek CERT’s place in the hierarchical ICS structure will be illustrated at the end of this presentation
  - Walnut Creek CERT also has a non-tactical command structure for every day operations (non-disaster days)
Unit 6 – Class Objectives

- Understand the principles of ICS
- Describe the CERT organization
- Understand how CERT mobilizes in a disaster
- Be aware of documentation requirements

Principles of On-Scene Management

- Maintain physical safety of disaster workers
- Provide clear leadership and organizational structure
- Improve effectiveness of rescue efforts

The Incident Command System (ICS)

- Well-defined management structure (chain of command)
- Manageable span of control
- Common terminology
- Effective communication
- Consolidated action plans
- Comprehensive resource management
- Accountability
ICS Management

- Span of control:
  - Is between 3 and 7 team members
  - Optimally does not exceed 5 team members

CERT ICS Structure

- CERT Commander... “What to do”
  - CERT leader
- Operations... “How to do it”
  - Manage the teams in the field
- Logistics... “How to support it”
  - Manage resources, supplies and equipment
- Planning / Intelligence... “What’s going on”
  - Make incident plans, collect and display information
- Administration... “What gets recorded”
  - Collect and compile documentation
ICS: CERT Commander (CC)

- Has overall responsibility at the incident or event.
- Organizes the Command Post
- Prioritizes communications with the City's Emergency Operations Center (EOC)
- Assigns & works with Section leaders -- initially CC may be responsible for Operations, Plans, Logistics and Administration duties. As event grows the CC will delegate these.
- Ensures coordination of staff actions and activities
- Sets objectives and priorities (Incident Action Plan)

CERT Commander at Command Post

The CC is co-located with Plans and Ops at the Command Post (CP)

Incident Commander Also Manages

- **Communications Unit** – manages communications between CERT teams in the field and the Command Post (CP) and between the CP and the City Emergency Operations Center (EOC)
  - CERO (CERT Emergency Radio Operators) located near the EOC. Passes CERT messages (neighborhood damage assessments, victim information, etc) to EOC.
- **Safety/Security Officer** – Optional position. Focuses on and enforces the safety of the CP and people responding to the incident.
ICS: Operations Section at Command Post

- **Operations**:
  - Handles key actions, such as Search and Rescue, Medical Operations
  - Develops the structure to meet the needs of the event (e.g. creating a team to handle displaced animals)
  - Directs all resources deployed to perform the key actions

ICS: Logistics

- **Logistics**:
  - Provides resources and all other services needed to support an incident:
    - Personnel
    - Food
    - Facilities
    - Transportation, etc
  - Maintains resource status during event (NOTE: must work closely with Plans)

Logistics by the Cache at Command Post
ICS: Plans Section

- **Plans:**
  - Gathers information, thinks ahead
  - Works with the Incident Commander to create an Action Plan
  - Maintains situation status boards along with Ops scribe
  - Maintains incident documentation until event ends
  - Works closely with Logistics to track status of resource requests

Field Message Flow Through Plans

CERT Operations Section
Disaster Medical Operations (DMO)

DMO area located at the Command Post

Search and Rescue Team / Transport Team

SAR

Transport

Animal Staging

Animal Staging area located at the Command Post
ICS: Administration

- **Administration / Finance:**
  - Rarely used in CERT (City manages finance)

- Walnut Creek CERT check-in/out at the Command Post is handled by Plans using a T-card Board

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T-card Board for Tracking CERT Resources

- CERT Area personnel (‘resources’) are tracked using a T-Card Board set up at Plans at the Command Post
- **Purpose:** Accelerate check-in process, allow leadership to see the CERT resources available, assigned, and resting, as well as team assignments.
- T-cards for individual CERT members are moved to the appropriate column to show availability & current assignment

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Disaster Recovery Funds

- Walnut Creek could be awarded FEMA recovery funds for the hours that CERT volunteers work
- Tracking the number of hours that individual CERT members volunteer during disaster response is important
  - *If you don’t write it down it didn’t happen*
- CERT members continue to help their community to recover long after they stand down from a disaster response
Scribe

- IMPORTANT POSITIONS IN ALL SECTIONS
  - Maintains records and written communications for his/her leader
  - Keeps track of details for his/her leader
  - Maintains the victim list (this list will be given to Plans for a complete list)
  - Maintains team/Section paperwork (eventually, all paperwork is given to Plans for compilation into a complete record)

Area Coordinators - Everyday Management

- Walnut Creek CERT Leadership includes an Area Coordinator (AC) for each of the 8 neighborhood areas.
  - ACs manage their CERT area when the Integrated Command System (ICS) is not activated, i.e., when not in disaster response mode.
  - ACs maintain their area's roster, run their monthly area CERT meetings, and notify their area CERT members (called CERTs for short) about planned activities and training.

Dealing with the Media

- Refer all media inquiries to City's Public Information Officer (PIO)
- Do not let media inhibit CERT goals
- Do not let media enter Command Post
- Do not release any information
CERT Mobilization

What to do after an earthquake hits

CERT Activation for city-wide disaster

- In the event of a city-wide disaster:
  1. Check on the safety of your own family and home.
  2. Wait for CERT activation by the City of Walnut Creek (phone, text, email, radio, or in-person).
  3. Once activated, grab your CERT backpack and head for your CERT Staging Area.

- On the way, take notes of what you observe. Be sure to write down exact addresses! This information will be useful to our first responders and CERT Incident Commanders as they determine their priorities.

- Automatic activation ONLY APPLIES following a large-scale earthquake (very strong shaking for roughly 20 seconds or longer) when CERTs may not receive an activation call-out. In this situation only, CERTs are requested to proceed directly to their neighborhood staging areas for further instructions from the Incident Commander.

Walnut Creek CERT Activation

- After a disaster Walnut Creek CERTs are encouraged to work as private citizens in their immediate neighborhoods until they are activated as CERTs.
- Only an official City representative (e.g., Emergency Managers, Police, and other staff) can activate CERTs.
- CERTs will be activated by phone/email, if possible, otherwise by radio:
  - An automated callout system notifies CERTs via text messages, automated voice calls, and emails with response instructions.
  - CERTs should also monitor FRS radio channel 8 or HAM radio preset 16 (CERT repeater) for callout instructions
Personal Disaster Response vs. CERT Mobilization

- After a disaster, Walnut Creek CERTs are encouraged to work as private citizens in their immediate neighborhoods until they are activated as CERTs by the City.
- CERTs should take care of themselves, their family, their pets, their home, and their neighbors if it is safe to do so.
- CERTs leave pets with a trusted person (pets of CERTs are not allowed at Animal Staging area at the Command Post).
- CERTs go to their pre-designated Staging Area, taking notes about what they are seeing along the way. This is called a "windshield survey," as described in Unit 5.

CERT Mobilization

- The first CERT to arrive is in charge of incident response and is CERT CC until a more qualified CERT arrives.
  - Initial tasks at Staging Area are (1) set up radio equipment, (2) take pop-ups, etc. out of Staging Area cache & set up for CP.
- CERT CC will develop an organization plan.
- Priorities may change as operation continues; CERT CC must stay on top of these shifting priorities.
- Communications must be organized, efficient and effective.

Do the most good for the greatest number of people while maintaining CERT safety.

"Eyes and Ears"

CERTs play two vital roles:

1. CERTs help others in the absence of first responders.
2. CERTs provide critical information to the City of Walnut Creek’s Emergency Operations Center (EOC) that will help the City set priorities and allocate resources where most needed.
   - Resources are police, fire, EMT, ambulance, CERTs, and NGOs such as Red Cross.
“If you didn’t write it down, it didn’t happen”

CERT Forms

- Form Number 1 --- who can guess what it is?
- Sample forms are included in student notebook
- Walnut Creek CERT forms --- as formalized, are posted on our website
  
  www.walnut-creek.org/CERT

Tabletop Exercise

- Split into three groups as assigned by instructors
- Choose a group scribe & a group leader/spokesperson
Objectives of CERT Organization

- Identifies the scope of the incident
  - What is the problem?
- Determines an overall strategy
  - What can CERT do?
- Deploys resources
  - Who is going to do what?
- Documents actions and results
  - If you didn't write it down, it didn't happen

Some helpful information

- Walnut Creek CERT has eight pre-designated Staging Areas, informally called "caches"
- Every Staging Area has a metal storage container to hold CERT supplies
- Every Staging Area has Ham radio equipment to talk with the City’s Emergency Operations Center
- For purposes of this exercise, assume all Staging Areas are equipped with basic supplies unless otherwise stated in the questions that follow.

CERTs Gathered at Staging Area Cache
Class Exercise - Scenario

A severe earthquake occurs on the Concord Green Valley fault.

● After making sure your home and family are safe, what do you do?

● Two of the key roles for CERTs are:
  ▪ to assist their neighbors if it is safe to do so
  ▪ to gather information in the neighborhoods using windshield surveys and SAR team reports

Class Exercise – Team CC

● What actions might the CERT Commander take during the initial period after arriving at the Staging Area / Command Post?

Class Exercise – Team PLANS

The City wants to know the overall status of your neighborhood.

● Who does what?
Class Exercise – Team MED OPS

Injured people begin arriving at the Staging Area / Command Post.

● Who does what?

Unit Summary

● CERT Organization
  ▪ CERT members are part of ICS (Incident Command System)
● ICS – for Tactical Command
  ▪ Flexible and Scalable
  ▪ Command Structure
● Documentation - very important
  ▪ This will help your community to recover

Appendix – Information Handling Boards in CP

A few key questions may be illustrative of how Command Post (CP) staff keeps informed using tools that are part of Information Handling.
The information needed is tracked on boards described in the following slides.
● How many CERT volunteers do we have?
● Where are Field Teams right now?
● What incidents are we working?
● How many victims do we have? How much damage have we observed?
● What has been reported to the EOC?
Communications Channels Board

- **Purpose**: Informs CP staff of current communications channels

- **Instructions**: Record the FRS or Ham radio frequency preset numbers for use by the CERT Area. (See the Walnut Creek Band Plan for preset info.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Comms Channels Board</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Citywide emergency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field Teams 1, 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field Teams 3, 4, 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CP communications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IC resource net</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walnut Creek EOC</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Field Team Status Board

- **Purpose**: Allows Ops to track Field Team location and the time of last communication.

- **Instructions**: Enter Time and Location for each Field Team as messages are received, placing a mark in “New?” that is removed by Ops Scribe once the Map is updated. Ops Scribe updates assignment for each Field Team. Comms may conduct a roll call if status is overdue for one or more Field Teams as radio traffic permits or requested by Ops Chief.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field Team Status Board</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAR 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAR 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MedOps 1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CERT Area Statistics Board

- **Purpose**: Allows Plans to track overall situation and provide status to the IC and City EOC

- **Instructions**: Enter tick marks for Victims Found, Damaged Structures Found, and Situations Beyond CERT as they are reported. At the end of an Operational Period, enter the total # Active CERTs (assigned plus available), Victims on Hand at Med Ops, Animals on Hand, and the Cumulative % of Area Covered.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CERT Area Statistics Board</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Operational Period</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>08:00-12:00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:00-16:00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CERT Area Resources, aka T-Card Board

**Purpose:** Accelerate the CERT check-in process; allow leadership to see the CERT resources available, assigned, and resting, as well as team assignments.

**Instructions:** Prepare T-Cards for each CERT and maintain them in the "Not Present" column. Once a CERT checks in, move their T-Card to the position reflecting their status.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CERT Area Resources</th>
<th>Operations</th>
<th>Overhead</th>
<th>Unassigned</th>
<th>Available</th>
<th>Not Present</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Field Teams</td>
<td>Medical</td>
<td>IC &amp; Stuff</td>
<td>Available</td>
<td>Not Present</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAR North 1</td>
<td>SAR North 1</td>
<td>Plans</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAR North 2</td>
<td>Transport 1</td>
<td>Logistics</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAR North 1</td>
<td>Transport 2</td>
<td>Connex</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Situation Beyond CERT (optional board)

**Purpose:** Provides CP with a list of all incidents beyond CERT capacity to respond.

**Instructions:** Enter items on the Board as Field Team Message Forms are received and the EOC is alerted via CERO Message Forms. Update Board as the EOC reports response, if any. Board may contain non-life-threatening situations requiring a response by non-CERT agencies (e.g., blocked road).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Situations Beyond CERT</th>
<th>Message</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Time Reported to EOC</th>
<th>EOC Response Status</th>
<th>Priority</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13:05</td>
<td>Collapsed structure, trapped victim</td>
<td>1st St. &amp; 2nd Ave</td>
<td>13:15</td>
<td>Emergency</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13:11</td>
<td>Power line down</td>
<td>1st St. &amp; 3rd Ave</td>
<td>13:15</td>
<td>Urgent</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17:47</td>
<td>Burning structure</td>
<td>120 Center St</td>
<td>17:49</td>
<td>Fire Dept alerted</td>
<td>Emergency</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Map Board

**Purpose:** Displays current information so Ops can manage current incidents.

**Instructions:** Add markings as recommended using symbols to reflect the current status and information on incidents being worked. Mark routes / areas covered by Field Teams and windshield surveys on the Map with a marker.