

Interested in being more prepared for an emergency? BECOME A CERT MEMBER

What would you do in the event of a disaster? Would you be able to take care of yourself and your family? Would you be able to assist your neighbors until help arrived? That is exactly what some residents of Weston have prepared for. Ten residents recently completed the Community Emergency Response Team training program offered by the Broward Sheriff's Office Division of Fire Rescue. Better known as **C.E.R.T.**, this program educates people about disaster preparedness for hazards that may impact their area and trains them in basic disaster response skills, such as fire safety, light search and rescue, team organization, and disaster medical operations.

People who go through CERT training have a better understanding of the potential threats to their home, workplace and community and can take the right steps to lessen the effects of these hazards on themselves, their homes or workplace. If a disaster happens that overwhelms local response capability, CERT members can apply the training learned in the classroom and during exercises to give critical support to their family, loved ones, neighbors or associates in their immediate area until help arrives. When help does arrive, CERTs provide useful information to responders and support their efforts, as directed, at the disaster site. CERT members can also assist with non-emergency projects that improve the safety of the community. CERTs have been used to distribute and/or install smoke alarms, replace smoke alarm batteries in the home of elderly, distribute disaster education material, provide services at special events, such as parades, sporting events, concerts and more.

There are currently 1100 C.E.R.T teams throughout the United States with over 160 teams in the State Of Florida. **The Weston C.E.R.T. Teams**, led by Captain Jeff Andrews of the Broward Sheriff's Office, have completed 24 hours of training in the areas of building construction, fire suppression, first aid, terrorism response, disaster psychology and disaster preparedness. One of the highlights of the course is utilizing different types of fire extinguishers on actual fires. They continue to meet at Fire Station No. 81 on a monthly basis in order to keep up with their training and learn new skills. Many Team members are completing the American Heart Association CPR class and have attended the State Conference and participated in the Broward Region Disaster Drill in May of 2007.

INTERESTED? Please contact the Broward Sheriff's Office Fire Rescue Division for information on the next class, call **954-389-2090**.