

CERT NEWS

COMMUNITY EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM

Jan/Feb/Mar 2016

Calendar—

FIRST AID/CPR/AED—

Saturday, Feb. 6, 8am-12:30pm
Meets at LBFD, Station#2 The training is offered through the Community Services Department—<https://secure.rec1.com/CA/city-of-laguna-beach/catalog> (Click on Special Programs.)
Or call 949-497-0716.

DISASTER PREPAREDNESS—

Tuesday, Feb. 16, 6-8pm
At the Susi Q. Notification/signup with information will come via email. Covering all aspects of preparedness—GoBags, family, pets, home, neighborhood needs.

MANNED INFO BOOTH

Saturdays, Feb. 20 and March 19, 8:30am-1:00pm
At the Farmer's Market. (See pg 4)
RSVP Sandi Cain at LagunaCERT@gmail.com

PATRIOT'S DAY PARADE

Saturday, March 5

ALL HANDS QUARTERLY CERT MEETING—

Tuesday, Mar. 15, 6-8pm
At the Susi Q. Notification/signup with information will come via email. Topics TBD. Be there!

CERT Board

CONTACT US:

LagunaCERT@gmail.com

Alx Simmons, CERT Director
Sandi Cain, Outreach Chief
Jerry Myers, Radio Comm Chief
Susan Reese, Marketing Chief
Mike Mitchell, Training Chief
Charlie Barr, Development Chief

Jordan Villwock, MS,
Emergency Operations Coordinator
jvillwock@lagunabeachcity.net

From the Emergency Operations Coordinator

Happy New Year CERT Members! I hope you each had a great holiday season with your families and loved ones. Last month I was promoted into the full-time Emergency Operations Coordinator position and have been busily updating plans and preparing the City for El Nino. One of my goals this year is to **grow and expand our CERT program** which will create more volunteer opportunities and participation in local exercises or drills.

As we grow and make the program better I need to **thank the CERT Board** for all the time and effort they have placed into the program. I can honestly say without them we wouldn't be where we are today.

Please take a look at the calendar of CERT events and attend as many as possible. For those who are wondering, I have not forgotten about ID cards and will be working on them in the very near future. If you have any questions don't hesitate to send it to lagunacert@gmail.com.

Jordan Villwock, MS

Emergency Operations Coordinator

Looking Back at a Great Year...

2015 was an important year for Laguna Beach CERT, one of growth, and one in which a foundation has been established for future expansion.

from Alx Simmons, CERT Director

As we reflect on 2015, we would like to start by thanking each one of you for taking the initiative to be better prepared to respond to emergency situations and for contributing your time to improve the safety of the community.

We would like to share with you a summary of the 2015 activities & accomplishments and a glimpse of our goals for 2016.

2015 was a year of growth. Our Laguna Beach CERT volunteer program experienced significant growth in 2015 by gaining 58 new volunteers—a 42% increase. Thanks to the program's now 195 active volunteers, more than 2,700 volunteer hours were contributed in 2015.

2015 was an important year for our future. Two milestone events occurred in 2015 that have established a foundation for program expansion. First, a Laguna Beach CERT Volunteer Board of Directors was launched in May. And second, the City funded and staffed a full time Emergency Operations Coordinator position. Staffing these functions have added a significant level of focus towards growing and strengthening CERT preparedness in Laguna Beach.

Looking Back continues on page 6

El Niño Is Coming!

from Charlie Barr, Development Chief

For a number of months we have been hearing on the news and in the newspapers “El Niño is coming.” The city even held a meeting to encourage everyone to get ready.

As a member of the CERT Board of Directors, I thought I was ready for a really wet winter. Several weeks ago I found out that I wasn’t really ready.

Edison had a planned outage from 8:00am to 5:00pm on my street. The power was not turned off until about 9:20am and did not come back on as expected at 5:00pm.

That is when I learned that I wasn’t as ready as I thought I was. I have a number of flashlights stored around the house in my CERT go bag and in my car. But to be honest with you, I had not thought far enough ahead to have more than a flashlight. Think about it: have you ever tried to cook a meal by flashlight? It doesn’t work well. Immediately, I made a list of things that I needed and at the top of the list were two lanterns. I found two LED lanterns that are powered by flashlight batteries and purchased them for under \$30 each. I am lucky because, in addition to forced air heating, I also have a fireplace that can be used to heat my home with gas or wood. Do you have a backup plan for heating?

There are other things to look at around your home. Have you cleaned out your rain gutters and are they in good repair? Are your windows and doors sealed so that rain water will not leak into your home during extended or driving rain? Have you inspected and repaired your roof? If you live on a hillside, are drains clean and open? If you park your car in the garage can you get your car out in the event of an electrical failure? Are your windshield wipers in good working order?

Do you have food and water on hand to last for several days? Should you lose electricity, do you have a plan for keeping the food in your refrigerator from spoiling? Are you prepared with things that are peculiar to your health needs (such as oxygen or other life-sustaining needs)?

The city gives free sandbags that homeowners can pick up at two locations. The bags are filled and weigh about 40 pounds each. (see pg. 4)

Plan now how you will commun-

icate with family members.

In the event of flooding, the city’s services will be stretched thin. Be prepared. Review your plan for El Niño now.



SUBMITTED BY MIKE MITCHELL

A car blocking the creek in Laguna Canyon caused flooding in 2010.

From the Radio Chief

from Jerry Myers, Radio Communications & Technology Chief

Happy New Year! It looks like the New Year has started with a bang with back to back to back El Niño storms but Laguna Beach escaped the first round with little problem. Our radio team continues to practice twice weekly to keep our communication skills and equipment at the ready should the impending El Niño kick into high gear.

Lately we have been hearing construction workers, children and others on our practice channel. This is more than likely due to the “shared” FRS/GMRS frequencies at our disposal. Our radio team will have a new radio channel lineup in 2016 to alleviate some cross chatter that we encounter with other radio

owners. It is my hope that switching to GMRS only channels for our team will eliminate most of the interference and



allow our team to have better practices.

In closing, I would like everyone to take the time to review your “go” bag, your flashlight batteries, emergency

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What's Your Story?

We are now a CERT team of 200 strong! But that makes it challenging to get to know fellow team members who weren't in your CERT class. To help you get acquainted, we're instituting a feature for each newsletter called "What's Your Story?" **We hope you will submit YOUR story** about how and why you got involved in CERT in about 200 words, along with a picture (at a CERT event or any head shot). We're starting off with board members and hope you'll be inspired to share your own story!

Why We Joined CERT

by Sandi Cain

Disasters made me feel helpless from the time I was a kid in tornado country and a friend's house ended up with half a roof. I was always taught to help others in need. But doing that in disasters without training seemed impossible.

Then Laguna burned in 1993. I didn't get home from work that first night and made an evacuation list sitting at work and relaying additions to my husband by landline in that pre-cell-phone era. The phone kept cutting out. I've refined that list every year since. I felt helpless watching on TV. We didn't burn, but I can still smell the ashes that covered the cars at Ruby's the next morning.

Twelve years later, Hurricane Katrina brought that helpless feeling back. By then I was a volunteer with Best Friends Animal Society—but that still didn't qualify me to respond with 'boots on the ground.' So I helped online, trying to match found pets with people from afar.

In 2007 I again helped online posting evacuation updates on the Best Friends California network during SoCal's massive fires, coordinating with EOCs for information and later took some Red Cross classes, but still didn't feel connected locally.

So when Laguna Beach formed the Emergency Disaster Preparedness Committee. I applied, was appointed and then became part of the city's first CERT class. Now I feel like I CAN help at a local level and make a difference when a major event happens. I know I'll never be doing swift water rescue or climbing fire ladders in a major blaze, but having this training and being a voice for preparedness in our city is exactly what I was seeking all my life. I hope it makes a difference when (not if) the next emergency hits.



by Jerry Myers

I've always been a bit of a Boy Scout. I like gadgets, equipment, tools and supplies. There, I said it. For those of you who know me, this is no surprise.

Now that I have a little more free time in my life, it was time to give back. Laguna Beach has given me so much since I arrived in 1969 that CERT seemed like the perfect opportunity to return the favor. Since I have been in Laguna Beach, I have seen my fair share of natural disasters. I've seen two major landslides, horrible flooding and had family members lose everything in the fire of 1993. All things I do

Why We Joined CERT continues on page 6



CERT Seeks Canyon Members

El Niño has begun, leaving behind a false sense of security with its first venture ashore in Laguna Beach, as we were lucky enough to get hit with only fringes of the storms. That might not last.

Longtime residents know that Laguna Canyon is one of our most vulnerable areas for flooding—and yet curiously we have few CERT members from the Canyon. We're hoping you can help remedy that! If you have friends, family or business associates who live or work in the canyon (including artist friends who exhibit at our festivals), please encourage them to sign up for the next CERT class which will begin in May—interested individuals can email us at lagunacert@gmail.com and be notified when enrollment for that class begins.

Quick Bits

Please take a minute to address each of the three things below to help us communicate with you efficiently and plan CERT participation events!

- Let us know if you'd like to be part of the CERT contingent in the Patriots' Day Parade on

March 5. We will march with the Police Department.

- Provide us with the name of your mobile phone carrier so that we can increase efficiency and use targeted text-message callouts as needed
- If you have moved or changed your landline, cell phone or email contact information, please let us know.

You can do all of this via email to lagunacert@gmail.com! Please take this action by Feb. 8!

Sandbags Available

The City of Laguna Beach offers free, unfilled sandbags at its four fire stations. Unfilled sandbags cannot be filled with sand from Laguna's beaches or playgrounds.

Pre-filled sandbags will be available when the City is expecting

heavy rain on a first-come-first-served basis to residents of Laguna Beach (be prepared to show ID). Go to Act V parking lot at 1900 Laguna Canyon Road, or the Aliso Beach Park inland parking lot at 31118 S. Coast Hwy.

Visit lagunabeachcity.net/cityhall/police/emergprep for more information about emergency preparedness.

Spread the Word?

We are asking for Booth Team volunteers to staff information booths at local events. We have just confirmed Feb. 20 and Mar. 19 for Farmers' Market booths. If you are interested in helping with these or other information booth efforts, please contact Sandi Cain at lagunacert@gmail.com and we'll add you to the Booth Team if you haven't already signed on for that effort.

Radios, continued from page 2

supplies, water, and emergency contacts list. Check your property drainage and rain gutters. Oh, and don't forget your rain gear and rain boots!

Be familiar with your property, your emergency plan and your gear. That way if there is a problem this winter you will be prepared. We sometimes tire of practice but practice keeps us prepared and being prepared is a top priority in CERT.

Be safe and I will talk to you soon.

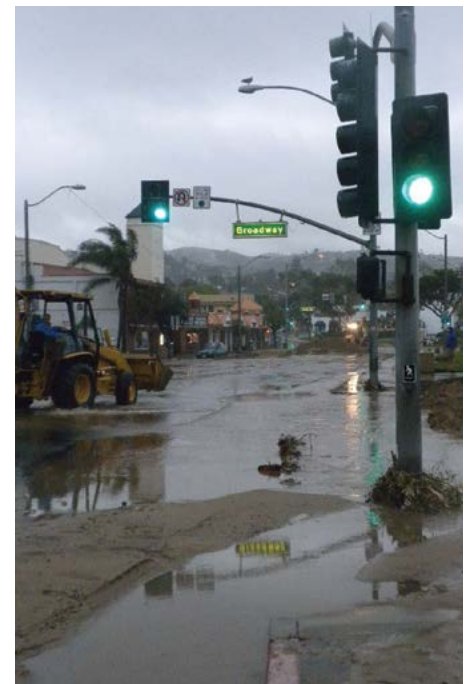
Training Opportunities from Mike Mitchell, Training Chief

2016 looks to be another very busy training year for Laguna Beach CERT. As we get the year started, we will be introducing a monthly training schedule as well as three All Hands meetings. These will be a good opportunities to stay sharp on the basic skills we will need to respond to the community's needs. It will also get us working together to create some cohesiveness in our community team. Everyone in CERT plays a very important role. It doesn't matter if you are 18 or 88 we will have a job for everyone.

Here are a few dates for the first quarter you will want to make note of (also see the calendar on page 1):

- Sat., February 6, 8am-12:30pm.... CPR/First aid/AED Certification by LBFD @ Station #2 training room
- Tues., February 16, 6-8pm Disaster Preparedness by LB CERT @ Suzi Q Com. Center
- Tues., March 15, 6-8pm..... All Hands Laguna CERT Meeting By LB CERT @ Suzi Q Com. Center

CHECK BACK FOR INFORMATION ON NEXT CERT CLASS IN MAY



SUBMITTED BY MIKE MITCHELL



Laguna Beach CERT Class #6 graduates!

Congratulations to all our recent graduates.



- Justin Fritzley
- Gwen Myers
- Craig Von Peters
- Mona Roberts
- Steve Whelan
- Janice Hayden
- Steven Morgan
- Anne Sadler
- Robert Zur Schmiede
- Jo Jensen
- Cathy Bosko
- Michelle Veyna
- Rod Caufield
- Wendy Caufield
- Carol Eastman
- Tracy Newton
- Gregory Krogscheepers
- Chantale McConnell
- Mary Locatelli
- Helen Abramsen
- Enrique Delatorre
- Richard Holder
- Dennis Eastman
- Abby Kanarek
- Matthew Meshekoff
- Rocio Chavez
- Erin Sparkuhl
- Kirsten Rogers
- ilse Lenschow
- Rick Colson

Why We Joined CERT, *continued from page 3*

not wish to relive. I never want to see those horrified faces on my friends and loved ones again.

My occupation as a residential General Building Contractor has kept me active and outside throughout my career and there never seems to be a dull moment. I love my profession and being outside for most of my life has taught me to respect the weather. I have never been able to beat it, only to be prepared and then jab, feint and parry the many blows Mother Nature throws your way. It's worked out, mostly, for the last thirty years because I was prepared.

When a friend of mine told me about the CERT program two years ago, I was intrigued. Here was an opportunity to receive free training, learn to help others and you guessed it, use more gadgets, equipment, tools and supplies! Are you serious? Count me in.

Signing up and completing the CERT class has to be one of the best things I have ever done for my family and more importantly, me. I have been given the knowledge and confidence through training and practice that I will be able to help my family and others in time of need or disaster. I now have those tools to help others and it feels great.

I have made many friends through the CERT program in Laguna Beach and other cities. I continue to learn and train on a weekly basis, always do my best to share my experience with others, and more importantly, stay prepared.

It has been a great experience that I hope continues for many years to come.

**CERT — doing
the greatest good
for the greatest
number of people.**

The Ranch Provides CERT Training to 20 Team Members

The Board of Laguna Beach CERT would like to congratulate The Ranch on its proactive approach to emergency readiness that saw them request CERT training for 20 team members even before the final touches have been put on the newest incarnation of an historic property. It's a step we hope other businesses may emulate.

"As an organization committed to authentic hospitality, we understand the importance of being ready for anything," said Ranch General Manager Kurt Bjorkman. "With our unique location, our goal with CERT Training is to prepare ourselves for any circumstance, be that here at the Resort, our city or our own neighborhoods," he added.

Bjorkman said the CERT Training offered by the City of Laguna Beach is "an incredible way for local business owners and residents to better prepare to protect themselves and their community and is "one important way we feel we can have an immediate and future positive impact."



*Kurt Bjorkman,
Ranch General
Manager*

Looking Back at a Great Year, *continued from page 1*

2015 Highlights. CERT program activities & accomplishments included;

- Launch of a Laguna Beach CERT Newsletter
- Addition of a second class to train and certify new CERT graduates
- Staffed Recruiting & Information booths to raise awareness of the CERT program and educate residents on preparedness.
- Planning & execution of a South Orange County Annual Exercise Drill held in September.
- Offered continuing education training.
- Participated in the Orange County Mobile Field Force Drill, a training exercise for emergency providers.

2015 Recognition. The Orange County CERT Mutual Aid Program (CMAP) was awarded the 2015 FEMA Individual and Community Preparedness Award for Outstanding CERT programs initiatives. Laguna

Beach and our volunteers participate in CMAP.

As for 2016, we have several initiatives proposed that will strengthen CERT and our readiness, and we plan to increase volunteer opportunities for those of you who would like further involvement in the program. Highlights of our key focus areas include; Offering monthly continuing education and events, Organizing LB CERT by neighborhoods, Establishing databases to track members & volunteer hours, Enhancing recruiting efforts, and Applying for awards & grants.

On behalf of the CERT Board of Directors, we would like to thank each and every volunteer for your continuing support and service. We are lucky to have volunteers who are so passionate about Laguna Beach and who want to be better prepared to help protect themselves and their neighbors. We are very grateful for your enthusiasm and commitment.