



# THE GREEN HELMET

Neighbors Helping Neighbors

JANUARY 2024

## WINTER HAS ONLY JUST BEGUN!

FAIRFAX COUNTY

**CERT**

COMMUNITY EMERGENCY  
RESPONSE TEAM

Sponsored by  
Fairfax County  
Fire & Rescue



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# Weather Cancellation Policy

Keep Informed of Any Class Schedule Changes

Ginny K., Jeff K.

Canceling an event due to inclement weather happens every year, usually during the winter months. The decision to cancel an event can be difficult. It is also hard to get timely and complete notifications out to event participants.

## Fairfax County CERT Inclement Weather Policy

- **In-person Fairfax County CERT events will be canceled when the Fairfax County Government is closed** or when a non-Fairfax County site hosting the event is closed
- Alternately, the Event Lead may choose to move the event to virtual as long as a timely notice is sent to all students/participants
- Please keep an eye on your emails to keep informed about your upcoming classes, especially if inclement weather is in the forecast



## Sign Up for Fairfax Alerts - Stay Informed of County Closings

The Fairfax County Office of Emergency Management (OEM) offers Fairfax County residents an improved emergency alert system called Fairfax Alerts. Fairfax Alerts enables residents to be informed during significant events including weather, traffic and emergencies.

Users can receive alerts for up to five geographic locations like home, work or school and through 10 delivery methods including a cellphone, home phone, text message or email. It is critical for you, your family, friends, coworkers and neighbors to be informed during an emergency. No matter how you choose to customize your Fairfax Alerts, it is important to sign up!

**Sign up and learn more at [FairfaxCounty.gov/Topics/Alerts](https://FairfaxCounty.gov/Topics/Alerts)**

If you want to receive alerts from any of the other city or county governments in the National Capital Region, visit [Capitalert.gov/signup/sign-up.html](https://Capitalert.gov/signup/sign-up.html) for links to the appropriate websites.





# Safety Tips

Take Care of Yourself this Winter

Ginny K.

## We can't take care of others if we don't take care of ourselves.

Hydrate! Winter weather is dry. Be sure to drink lots of water throughout the day.

Take care of your skin. Winter cold and dryness can cause skin to crack, which hurts and raises the risk of infection. To keep your skin healthy, be sure to dress warmly including wearing gloves, limit shower time, use a moisturizer and lip balm (good to have in your CERT pack), use a humidifier, and don't forget your sun protection.

Ergonomics are even more important in cold weather when injuries are more likely to occur due to stiffness from the cold. Bend at the knees when shoveling snow, and pivot on your feet to turn instead of twisting your back. Wear shoes or boots with good traction. Walk as flat-footed as possible like a duck (or penguin) when walking on slippery surfaces, and try to keep at least one hand free to use for balance.

## Winter Viruses

Staying Healthy

Julie T., Alex V., Ginny K.

Winter viruses are circulating. COVID-19, flu, RSV, and colds are all circulating. As of December 30, 2023, Virginia is experiencing very high levels of flu.

### What can you do to protect yourself and others?

- Wash your hands regularly
- Stay home if sick
- Cover coughs and sneezes
- Avoid touching your eyes, mouth, and nose
- Wear masks
- Avoid contact with people who are sick
- Consider appropriate vaccinations
- Consider getting tested/treated if you are sick (fever, cough, shortness of breath).
- Treatment must start within 5-7 days for COVID-19, 1-2 days for flu
- Notify your known contacts to reduce spreading

More information is available at [CDC.gov](https://www.cdc.gov)



# Important Information

Publications, Assets, and Contact Information

Alex V., Jeff K.

## Downloadable Safety and Preparedness Resources



Prepare. Plan. Stay Informed.™

**Free Publications:** <https://www.ready.gov/publications>

**Social Media Preparedness Toolkits:** <https://www.ready.gov/toolkits>



**Free Preparedness Assets:**

<https://www.vaemergency.gov/media-assets>

## Emergency Contact Information



1-800-222-1222

<https://www.poison.org/>



571-350-1000

<https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/emergencymanagement/>



1-855-764-7661

[www.ASPCA.org](http://www.ASPCA.org)



**Report Outage and/or Download App**

<https://www.dominionenergy.com/virginia/report-outage-or-emergency>



**Report Outage**

<https://www.novec.com/>

**Or Text:** #OUT to 85700

**To get updates on reported outage Text:**  
Status to 85700



**Storm Spotter Program**

<https://www.weather.gov/SKYWARN>

# Heart Attack, Cardiac Arrest, & Stroke

## Effective Assessment and Treatment

Training

### Skill: Heart Attack

### CERT First Aid - Advanced

**Objective:** Provide effective First Aid assessment and treatment of a suspected heart attack.

#### Background

Heart Attack (cardio pulmonary arrest) is the number one cause of death in the United States. Heart attacks are caused by insufficient circulation (blocked arteries) resulting in hypoxia and the death of the heart's muscle tissue (myocardial infarction) or an arrhythmia (abnormal heart rhythm) (cardiac arrest). Prompt aid including Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR), the use of an Automatic External Defibrillator (AED), and attention by advanced medical care can be essential to the patient's survival. It requires immediate treatment, as increased delay reduces the odds of survival.

#### Signs

Shortness of Breath  
Sweating (diaphoresis)  
Vomiting  
Fainting  
Unusual Pulse (Palpitations)  
Restlessness  
Agitation

#### Symptoms

Chest pain; pressure or tightness. Squeezing or aching sensation in the center of the chest.  
Non-traumatic jaw, arm or Upper back (thoracic) pain, especially related to exertion.  
Faintness (syncope), Dizziness or Lightheadedness  
General Weakness  
Unusual Pulse (Palpitations)  
Nausea  
Gastro Intestinal upset, indigestion, heartburn  
Abdominal pain and/or cramps  
Feeling of Doom, scared or afraid

#### Specific Assessment Questions

SAMPLE-OPQRST Questions

#### First Aid Actions

- Assess:** Conduct Patient Assessment (MARCH, SAMPLE-OPQRST).
  - If conscious; conduct SAMPLE-OPQRST Assessment. See SAMPLE Skill Sheet.
  - If unconscious; conduct Head-to-Toe Assessment. See Head-to-Toe Assessment Skill sheet.
  - If available, apply pulse oximeter, read and record results.During patient assessment look for the signs and symptoms associated with a heart attack.
- Get Help:** When heart attack symptoms are recognized Call 911! Get an AED (or send someone for it). Do not wait for symptoms to worsen before calling for help. Stay with the person until more help arrives.
- Position Patient:** Get the patient off their feet and in a position of comfort. Loosen restrictive clothing to make both breathing and blood circulation easier. If CPR becomes necessary, patient will need to be placed in supine position.
- Apply CPR and AED:** If necessary, begin CPR IAW CPR protocols and, when available, attach the AED and follow the AED instructions.
- Hand-Off to EMS:** Brief arriving EMS using DeMIST process. (see DeMIST Medical Hand-Off)  
Help patient take their prescribed nitroglycerin? If the patient has medications and wishes to take them you may assist in preparing it. However, CERT FAR do not prescribe medications.

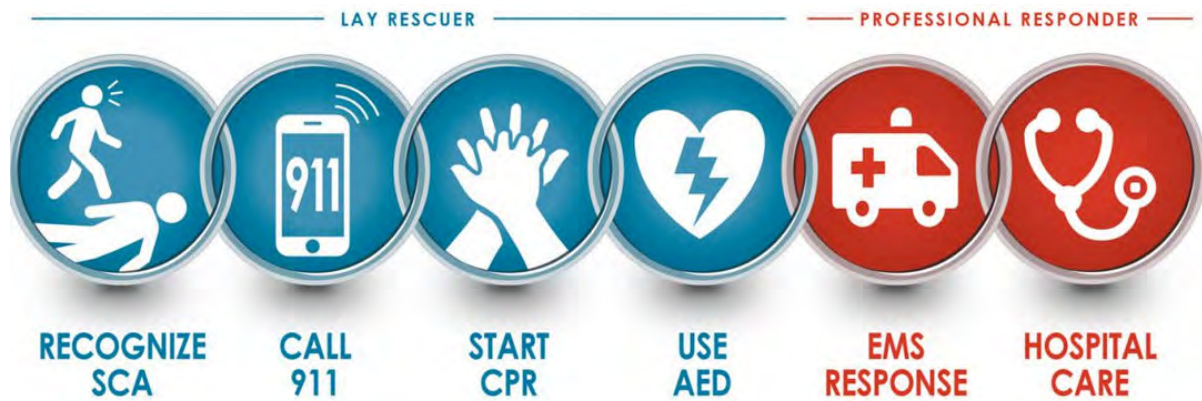
#### Conditions for 911/When to Seek Professional Help

If either you or the patient believes they are experiencing a heart attack. CALL 911!

If patient is unconscious, CALL 911! (Cause unknown, better safe than sorry)

Comments/Notes/Related Skills

Primary Assessment, Head-to-Toe Assessment, SAMPLE-OPQRST, DeMIST Medical Hand-Off skill sheets.



References

<https://www.mayoclinic.org/first-aid/first-aid-heart-attack/basics/art-20056679>  
<https://www.mountsinai.org/health-library/injury/heart-attack-first-aid>

### Cardiac Arrest

1. **Assess Patient:** Check Responsiveness and Breathing – If not responsive and Not Breathing – Clear Airway and give two breaths

2. **Call for Help:** Yell for help. Tell bystander to **Call 911!** and **get an AED.**

3. **Check Breathing:** Place ear next to nose and watch abdomen for signs of breathing.

4. **Perform CPR:** Provide 30 2" deep compressions (in about 16 seconds) and 2 Rescue Breaths (within 10 seconds). Repeat until AED arrives

5. **Apply AED:** When the AED arrives stop immediately and turn on the AED and follow the prompts.

**CARDIAC ARREST IS NOT A HEART ATTACK**

CARDIAC ARREST	HEART ATTACK
• Unresponsive	• Responsive
• Not Breathing	• Breathing
• Heart Stopped	• Heart Beating
• Needs CPR/AED	• NO CPR/AED

Patient is unresponsive, not breathing, experiencing a heart arrhythmia, needs CPR/AED!

THIS IS A MEDICAL EMERGENCY!

CALL 911!

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**Objective:** Provide effective assessment and First Aid treatment for Strokes.

### Background

A stroke is an interruption of the blood flow to the brain. This can be caused by a blockage in a blood vessel (ischemic – most common) or a break in a blood vessel (hemorrhagic (aneurism) – less common) feeding the brain. Within minutes of being deprived of blood, brain cells start dying. At first, the patient may have a severe headache, but it can quickly lead to paralysis on one side of the body and the loss of the ability to speak.

Strokes are real emergencies! Recognizing the signs and symptoms and getting the patient advanced medical care as soon as possible is critical. Drug treatment may be able to dissolve the clot, resulting in a full recovery if caught early.

Signs	Symptoms
<b>Balance:</b> Having difficulty with balance or a sudden fall. <b>Arms:</b> when lifting both arms one arm stay lower than the other. <b>Face:</b> Is the face numb or does one side droop? <b>Speech:</b> Slurred or garbled? Loss of bladder or bowel control Loss of consciousness	Dizziness, lightheadedness, Tingling, weakness, or numbness on one side of the body including the legs. <b>Eyes:</b> Dimness, blurring or loss of vision, especially in one eye. <b>Thunderclap</b> headache – the most severe headache with no apparent cause. (This is an additional symptom that may occur but by itself is not cause to call 911!) Nausea

### Specific Assessment Questions

<b>Balance</b> – Are you dizzy or having any trouble with your balance?
<b>Eyes</b> – Have you experienced a recent change in your vision? Is your vision blurred? Are you experiencing double vision?, or Have you lost vision in either or both eyes?
<b>Face</b> – Is your face numb or weak on one side? <i>Is their face visibly drooping to one side?</i>
<b>Arms</b> – Can you hold your arms up like this? Ask the person to raise both arms to eye level, palms up. Have them close their eyes. Does one arm drift downward within 10 seconds?
<b>Speech</b> – Repeat after me, “You can’t teach an old dog new tricks. The sky is blue.” <i>Is their speech slurred? Are they having trouble speaking or do they seem confused?</i>
<b>Thunderclap Headache</b> – Are you experiencing the worst headache of your life? (extra symptom – do not call 911 if this is the only symptom the patient is experiencing.)

### First Aid Actions







1.	<b>Assess Patient:</b> Assist the patient into a position of comfort. Conduct an assessment of the patient. Observe and Primary Assessment should lead to symptoms and signs. If unconscious, Call 911! And place in Recovery Position.
2.	<b>Suspect Stroke?</b> Assess BEFAST. Using the specific Assessment Questions above. Signs will quickly indicate a stroke. E.g. Massive headache, slurring speech, drooping mouth, vision problems, and inability to hold arms at the same level.
3.	<b>Call 911!</b> Immediately Call 911! Inform the dispatcher that you have a probable Stroke and need an ambulance.
4.	<b>Hand Off to EMS:</b> Quickly hand-off the patient to EMS and assist them as needed.

### Conditions for 911/When to Seek Professional Help

If you suspect someone is having a Stroke, Call 911! Immediately.
<b>Time:</b> If you answered yes to any of the first 5 Specific Assessment Questions above, Call 911, immediately. Time is of the essence to prevent further damage.
Patient is unconscious, Call 911!

## Comments/Notes/Related Skills

Observe Patient, MARCH, Primary Assessment, Head-to-Toe Assessment, SAMPLE-OPQRST Skill Sheet

B	E	F	A	S	T
<b>BALANCE</b>	<b>EYES</b>	<b>FACE</b>	<b>ARMS</b>	<b>SPEECH</b>	<b>TIME</b>
					
Sudden loss of balance or coordination?	Sudden change in vision? Loss or double vision in one or both eyes?	Face looks uneven? Weakness on one side of the face or facial droop?	Arm or leg weak/hanging down? Unable to lift both arms?	Speech slurred? Trouble speaking or seems confused?	For any of these symptoms Call 911 NOW! Time is Critical!

Additional Symptom: Patient may experience the worst headache of their life or think they have a migraine headache.  
TIA (Transient Ischemic Attack) occurs when a blood vessel in the brain is blocked for a brief period causing temporary stroke symptoms. Up to 40% of people that have a TIA usually go on to have a stroke. Those that are evaluated and treated reduce their risk of stroke by up to 85%.  
*Courtesy of BeFast.org*

## References - Web or Video Used:

<https://www.dukehealth.org/blog/know-signs-of-stroke-be-fast>

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q\\_Jc1rBehtE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q_Jc1rBehtE)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kr4syeWval8>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SUzqLeC6XTQ>



On September 16, 2023 we lost a member of our family, Chuck Luck. If you did not know him or wish to learn more about him, please see our write up about him, that included his obituary, in our [October 2023 newsletter](#) on the CERT website.

**On February 15, 2024 at 11:00 AM**  
**Chuck will be buried at Arlington National Cemetery**  
Please add this date to your calendar and watch your emails for further information.



# New Advanced First Aid Course

Applying the Lifesaving Skills Previously Learned

Watkins G.

## The Advanced First Aid Course

The Advanced First Aid Course is a unique Fairfax County CERT course that has evolved over time. The original versions of the class emphasized patient assessment and not actually treating conditions. With the instructor, and student input from early classes, we have made the current version more focused on applying the lifesaving skills that students have previously learned in other classes. Although, as CERTs, we learn about a large variety of injuries, illnesses, and treatments, there are only a handful of circumstances where CERT intervention is likely to save someone's life. Included among them are cardiac arrests, major bleeds, obstructed airways, anaphylaxis (assisting with an epiPen), and others.

By practicing the techniques learned to treat these conditions in a more challenging setting, we aim to improve and expand both the individual CERT's skills, and their confidence in performing those skills. Because this course focuses so much on conditions initially taught in other CERT classes, the prerequisites for the Advanced First Aid Course are greater than any other class. Students are required to have completed the following classes prior to taking the Advanced First Aid course: the CERT Basic training, CPR/AED/First Aid, Stop the Bleed, and StrokeSmart. We also highly recommend you refresh your memory by reviewing the materials from those courses to prepare for this one. If you have taken an earlier version of the Advanced First Aid course, consider retaking it. We believe it is greatly improved.

## CERT Training is Not Just for Big Disasters

Emergencies can Happen Anywhere

Kelly O.

### Not Just for Mass Casualty or Big Disasters

We, as CERT Volunteers, train for large scale disasters which may delay first responders. However, the training we receive goes far beyond that. Our skills are not limited to the rare mass casualty incident. We can make a difference in everyday incidents that may only affect one person.

You may be witness to or involved in a car accident, be at the movies when the guy in front of you has a heart attack, visiting your family when someone you love suffers a stroke, or taking a walk in your neighborhood and see a kid fall out of a tall tree they were climbing onto the sidewalk below. You, yourself, might accidentally cut your own hand, badly, while cutting vegetables. Emergencies can happen anywhere at any time. And you, with your CERT Basic and continuing education training, will know what to do. You may be the only one on scene who knows what to do.

### How My CERT Training Prepared Me to Help My Neighbor

Many members of CERT can tell you stories where their training was used in a real-life incident. For me, my story happened last year. Late one night, I heard loud banging on my apartment door. At first, I thought maybe it was someone who came home drunk knocking on the wrong door, but something told me that wasn't right, so I walked quickly towards the door and looked out the peephole. It took me 5 seconds to get to the door, but it felt longer. Then I heard them banging on the next door and I heard "HELP!". I opened my door, and as soon as I did, the lady who lives in the apartment across from me, ran up and grabbed my arm, begging for help. She said her husband passed out and hit his head and was not responding. I felt a pit in my stomach and slight fear that I wouldn't know how to help. I pushed that down fast. I looked at my husband, who was now at the door too, and told him to call 911. She ran back inside her place. I put on my slip-on shoes and walked over. As I knocked on her door to ask

if I could come in, a neighbor from downstairs ran up and asked how they could help. I told her they are having a medical emergency and 911 has been called. Since we live in a gated community and the gate never opens to sirens like it is supposed to, I asked her to get her gate clicker and make sure the emergency vehicles could get in and to guide them to this apartment. Then my neighbor next door, let's call him Stan, comes out and says he knows first aid; I told him to come with me.

We went inside. Her husband, the patient, was now up and walking towards the bedroom with her help. My husband came in and handed me the phone with 911 on it and left as he didn't know what else to do. I put 911 on speaker, gave them my name, the patient's current status, and said the wife was here to answer questions about the patient. The patient began asking for water and Stan said "I will get water!" and the 911 water operator and I both yelled "No water!". Stan asked why not, and I said "because there is a concern that he may throw up, making things worse" and the 911 operator agreed. At this time, the patient passed out again. This time he was in a very confined space. I guided the wife and Stan to put him in the recovery position on the floor as I could not reach him easily and they were closer. The wife became very distraught and could no longer communicate with 911, so I took that over fully. The wife was now completely covering her husband's head with her body. Since we did not know why he was passing out, I kept checking on him in case he stopped breathing and I had to administer CPR. It took minutes for the first responders to arrive, but it also felt like forever. 911 then said we could hang up now. Stan and I cleared a path in their very cluttered hallway so that the gurney could get through easier and then left the apartment so the professionals could do their job.

I was amazed how calm and clear headed I felt throughout the incident. And to be honest, I didn't really do much. However, my husband and my neighbors told me that they were impressed by the way I helped without hesitation, that I knew what to do, gave clear directions to everyone, and stayed the more calm than they could have. And for that, I truly have CERT to thank.

## **My Small Part Made a Big Impact**

The next day, the husband (patient) knocked on my door. He had a huge smile on his face and looked so much better. If it weren't for the hospital bands on his wrists, you would not have known what he went through the night before. He exclaimed "KELLY!! I'M ALIVE!!" He wanted to thank me for everything I did. He remembered me being there and his wife filled in any gaps. He told me what led up to his emergency, the care he got at the hospital, and that he had a scheduled surgery coming soon. I will not share more here because I think that would be too much personal information. I wanted to make sure that he knew that Stan and the downstairs neighbor helped as well and that we were all so worried about him and so happy he was doing well now.

When he left, I broke down crying in relief. It was strange. I had put up some sort of protective wall so that I could deal with the emergency. As soon as I knew he was okay, that wall collapsed, and I could feel it all. He is now fully recovered and very healthy. I still do not feel like I did much, but even to this day, my neighbor brings it up all the time. For that one person, just being there and doing my best, showed him that I cared and made sure his wife did not have to go through that horrible event alone, which meant the world to him.

So, the next time a Stop the Bleed, CPR/AED, first aid, or any other continuing education class comes up on the CERT calendar, please sign up and attend the class. I hope we never have to deal with a mass casualty incident. But everyday emergencies can happen at any time to anyone. And you may be the one who makes a difference in someone's life.

# Virginia's Good Samaritan Law

## Important Information to Know

Julie T.

If you respond to an isolated incident or even a disaster in your neighborhood, you are responding as a community member, and you are protected from liability by Virginia's Good Samaritan Law. If you are not in Virginia, check with your location, but all fifty states and DC have some form of Good Samaritan Law.

Any person who provides emergency assistance to anyone who is in danger of death or serious injury is exempt from civil liability for the death or injury of the victim.

### Important Points

- 1 Your action is voluntary, no compensation may be received.
- 2 Care must be in the scope of your training. You must not commit gross negligence or willful misconduct.
- 3 You make reasonable attempts to contact emergency services.

A link to Virginia's Law:

<https://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacode/title8.01/chapter3/section8.01-225/#:~:text=In%20good%20faith%2C%20renders%20emergency,fire%2C%20or%20any%20life%2Dthreatening>

## VMS Sign Up Tips

### How to Register and Withdraw for a Class

Wayne V.

#### Several Dates Listed for a Class in the Description, But Missing when Trying to Register

Sometimes when I look at VMS, I see several dates listed for a class in the description. But, when I try to register for the next class, it's not there. What is up with that?

We try to use one opportunity for a course and use shifts for each occurrence. At the bottom of each opportunity description, we list the dates so you will know when classes are scheduled for this year. If the shift you want is listed but does not appear, it is for one of two reasons:

- 1 The class is greater than 90 days out. Classes are available for registration by the system starting at the 90-day window. Registrations are not allowed before that time. Rarely, for various reasons, we might not activate the registration until a little closer to the class start date.
- 2 The class is already full. Once registration begins, a class can actually fill in just hours (it rarely does). However, once people have registered for all of the seats, the shift will no longer be visible. If someone withdraws from the class, the system will automatically make the seat available for someone else to use.

#### How to Withdraw from a Class Correctly

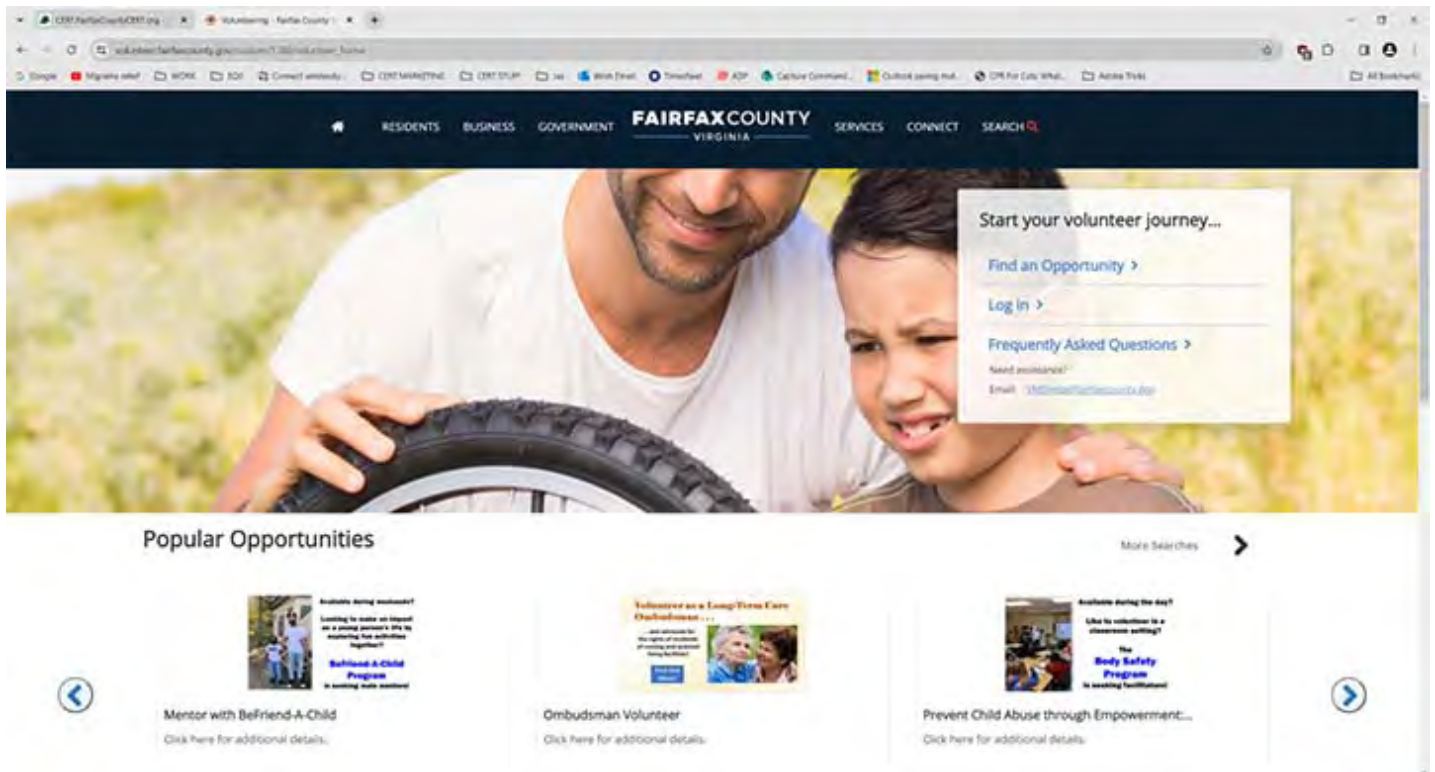
We understand that emergencies happen, but if you know that you cannot make a class, please withdraw as soon as possible, thus freeing up the seat for someone else. Waiting until the last minute to withdraw (or not withdrawing at all) wastes the seat, thus further wasting the time and effort of both the instructors and the cadre. Withdrawing is easy, painless, and only takes a minute. To withdraw, go to [https://volunteer.fairfaxcounty.gov/custom/1380/volunteer\\_home](https://volunteer.fairfaxcounty.gov/custom/1380/volunteer_home) and log in. At the top of the page, click on "Volunteer Search". On the left side, under



“Organization/Program”, enter “CERT” then click on “Fairfax County CERT” to get a list of CERT opportunities. Scroll down to find the opportunity from which you want to withdraw. It will state that “You are placed with one or more slots for this opportunity.” Click on “more details.” Scroll down to “Schedule Shifts.” Find the shift and click “Remove yourself.” Then confirm removal by clicking “Remove” on the pop-up. That is it.

## Secret If You Want to Join a Class

If all else fails... and this is a SECRET so don't tell anyone else... if a class is full you can take a chance and show up on the day of the class. We cannot guarantee that you will get in. But historically, we experience a 15% to 25% no-show rate. So, if one to two people fail to show up, we will use walk-ins to fill the vacant seats. If we can squeeze you in, we will. Please understand that there are a few classes where this might not work, but if we can get you in, we will. You may be wasting your time, but on the other hand, you may get lucky. You won't know until you try.





# Fairfax CERT Association

## Updates & How to Help

Julie T.

### Elections – Welcome New Board Members

We held elections in December and finally have a full board. We also changed the bylaws so our volunteer program lead also has a position on the board. Our current board is:

President	Marshall L.	Member-at-Large 1	Thomas W.
Vice President	Cory G.	Member-at-Large 2	Watkins G.
Secretary	Ray K.	Volunteer Liaison	Jeff K.
Treasurer	Julie T.	Volunteer Lead	Elvia F.

If you have not yet joined the Association, visit: <https://fccertva.square.site/membership>

### How Can You Help?

- ▶ Let us know if you see grants we might apply for or other fundraising opportunities
- ▶ Contact any board member at [Board@FairfaxCERTAssociation.org](mailto:Board@FairfaxCERTAssociation.org)
- ▶ Serve on the budget committee. Contact [Treasurer@FairfaxCERTAssociation.org](mailto:Treasurer@FairfaxCERTAssociation.org)
- ▶ Serve on the nominations committee. Contact [President@FairfaxCERTAssociation.org](mailto:President@FairfaxCERTAssociation.org)
- ▶ Consider running for a board seat

### We are in the Market for a New to Us Vehicle

We have begun to raise funds for a new to us vehicle. We would like to be able to purchase a vehicle when we find a good match. We will need to raise funds ahead of time so we are able to act when an interesting vehicle becomes available. **Visit:** <https://fccertva.square.site/vehicle-fund>

### Donate:

CERT Association General Donation

**Visit:** <https://fccertva.square.site/donation>

### Order Uniform Polos, Hat, Beanies, and Name Tags:

**To Order Online Visit:** <https://fccertva.square.site/uniform>

### Or Download Order Form and Bring to a Program Meeting:

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1khQxz-HDeJiTg9z2EAIQpmbDOS9WpOQK/view?usp=drive\\_link](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1khQxz-HDeJiTg9z2EAIQpmbDOS9WpOQK/view?usp=drive_link)



# Fairfax County CERT Association Fundraiser

## Papa John's Pizza Discount Card



### **Papa John's discount card \$15**

Good for *buy-one-get-one-free* pizzas at DMV store locations, works on ANY amount of pizzas per order (valid thru 2/2025)!

Sell these discount cards to your friends/neighbors (just like their kids sold you stuff for school/club fundraisers!), or buy them yourself (could be a belated holiday gift!). Just send them the link and description. Our Fairfax County CERT Association earns \$10 from every purchase! See the link to purchase directly, bring them to your next get together.



**<https://bit.ly/certpizza>**

Card purchase available online; can be mailed directly (small postage charge added) or in-person pickup arranged.



# Utilities and Medical Equipment

## You May be Eligible for Priority Power Restoration

Julie T.

If you or someone you know uses electrically powered medical equipment, you may be eligible for priority power restoration in an outage. You should still make plans for backup power options.



### Download and Print Application form

<https://www.dominionenergy.com/virginia/start-stop-service/medical-conditions>



### Download and Print Application form

[https://www.novec.com/Customer\\_Services/SMCC.cfm](https://www.novec.com/Customer_Services/SMCC.cfm)

## Impact Statement

### Fairfax County CERT Program

Jim M.

Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) is a FEMA initiative that offers a consistent, nationwide approach to volunteer emergency preparedness training and organization. Professional responders can leverage CERT capabilities as a force multiplier during disaster situations, allowing them to focus on more complex tasks. Organized and operating under the auspices and direction of the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department, the county's CERT program has graduated over 175 Basic CERT classes since its implementation in 2003, with over 3500 students. CERT offers a large variety of continuing education classes including Stop-the-Bleed®, StrokeSmart®, CPR/AED/First Aid, Advanced First Aid, Emergency Communications, and Lifting and Cribbing. Currently, there are approximately 550 CERT volunteers actively participating in emergency response training and exercises, as well as providing a broad range of non-emergency pro bono community services. An additional 1000 trained CERT volunteers are also estimated to reside and/or work within the county, and over 2400 trained CERT volunteers receive regular announcements and updates with our mailing list.

### Mission

The mission of Fairfax County CERT is to enhance emergency preparedness of residents through Community Engagement, Training, and Operations supporting county and community events, and thereby fostering safer, more resilient communities. This mission statement was specifically customized for the complexity and diversity of our county.

CERT volunteers are everyday residents that reflect the diverse demographics of the county and have completed a 24-hour training course based on FEMA guidelines tailored to meet the needs of Fairfax County. The community-based teams are designed to self-activate in their neighborhoods during large scale disasters in which Fire and Rescue response is limited or nonexistent for an extended time. These teams will be able to provide help for themselves and their neighbors until emergency personnel reach the scene, at which time, they can be integrated into the incident command structure. CERT members apply the skills learned as a part of their basic classes and work within the scope of that training. By training county residents to be prepared for, act in, and recover from disasters, CERT helps mitigate the impact of future disasters.

Equally important to its disaster roles, the CERT program provides valuable service to the community by having its members perform non-emergency public service during community events, assisting with public safety initiatives (e.g., smoke detector and SmartBurner installations), or performing non-operational roles such as shelter staffing or canteen operations during fire and police incidents, investigations, and exercises.

## Impact to the Community

As demonstrated in recent years, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Fairfax County CERT Program has proven its value as a “utility infielder” within the county’s greater emergency preparedness and response framework. CERT provides the county with a reserve contingent that is not only staffed by unpaid volunteers but is also managed by volunteer leadership that would otherwise require paid staffing positions. Contributing at several levels of community structure, CERT has been fully committed to the county’s “One Fairfax Policy” that all residents deserve an equitable opportunity to succeed. CERT classes are attended by a robust representation of the county’s varied demographics, including diverse ethnic groups; cultures representing Asia, Africa, the Middle East, and Latin America; people ranging in age from teenagers to retirees; English as a Second Language (ESL) residents; hearing impaired individuals; and members of under-served communities. As listed in the attached outline of CERT activities, CERT routinely provides services to the county’s Fire and Rescue Department, other county departments (e.g., Department of Family Services (DFS)), local and federal government agencies, houses of worship, secondary schools, civic organizations, and neighborhood communities (using CERT Neighborhood Teams). CERT is constantly in demand to provide communication, traffic safety and crowd management services for a broad range of local activities, from Fire Academy graduations to festivals, parades, and 5K fun runs.

The COVID-19 pandemic presented the county with complex challenges. CERT volunteers supported the county government in a variety of previously unimagined activities, including traffic and crowd management and logistics services at food distribution centers; manufacturing and distribution of face coverings; home delivery and shopping for isolated Neighborhood and Community Services (NCS) clients; traffic management and on-call support to vaccination clinics; and distribution of childcare hygiene kits. CERT presented county government with a surge capacity of vetted volunteers, trained in safety, communications, and organization, who could step up to create appropriate protocols and deliver services that were otherwise unassigned to established county departments.

Fairfax County CERT was awarded Fairfax County Volunteer Organization of the Year for 2017, 2021, and 2023 and is recognized as an exemplary program across the country. It has been selected to teach FEMA members as well as Peace Corps leaders from around the world. CERT instructors were invited to teach in Mexico (in Spanish), Chile, and the United Arab Emirates. The CERT program is recognized by the Fairfax County Fire Department as a 13th partner with the Fire Department (the other



12 partners are the Volunteer Fire Departments). A core cadre of CERT volunteers, recognized, trained, and designated as unpaid county employees, provide support services to the Fire and Rescue Department, including the operation of Canteen 400, a support vehicle that brings relief to Fire, EMS, and police personnel at major incidents, investigations, and exercises.

## Summary

FEMA projects that every dollar spent on emergency preparedness mitigates disaster impact by a ratio of 6:1. CERT is a creditable and well-recognized investment in that preparedness. Accordingly, the Fairfax County Department of Emergency Management and Security (DEMS) includes CERT as part of the county's preparedness as noted in the Community Emergency Response Guide (CERG) and its June 2023 Emergency Operations Plan. Not only does CERT provide a trained and qualified surge capability of organized volunteers with a broad range of emergency response and recovery skill sets, but CERT also provides an ongoing flow of non-emergency community services. Such services support paid professionals in multiple departments and routinely serve residents in a variety of organizations and districts across the county. The CERT Program's contribution of over 20,700 recorded volunteer hours in FY2020 equates to a pro-bono value of more than \$597,000[1]. Over the last four years, over 1411 trained volunteers have logged 69,800 hours of community service and training, a value of \$2,085,150. At a time when the county's first responder resources are severely taxed, trained CERT volunteers provide a valuable, flexible, responsive, safe, and reliable resource to fill this gap. As the County and the Fire and Rescue Department deals with the increasing budget challenges ahead, the greater the need there is for CERT and its volunteers. CERT relies on continued funding and support by Fairfax County, as well as public donations, to sustain critically needed volunteer recruitment, training, and services for successful risk mitigation and public service in Fairfax County. Your donations to the CERT Association ([www.fairfaxcertassociation.org](http://www.fairfaxcertassociation.org)) support this mission.

[1] Source: 2023 Value of Time Report. To learn about the methodology, visit: [independentsector.org/value-volunteer-time-methodology](http://independentsector.org/value-volunteer-time-methodology)



# Free Services Provided To Fairfax County

## Ongoing Programs and Special Support Services

Jim M.

### CERT Capabilities

- ▶ CERT Neighborhood Teams respond locally after a disaster
- ▶ Training for CERT and the Fire Department
- ▶ Free preparedness classes for the public – Emergency Preparedness, Stop the Bleed®, and Stroke Smart®
- ▶ Emergency Vehicle Operations Course (EVOC) trained and qualified drivers
- ▶ Trained personnel to assess communities for disaster damage (Community Assessment Program)
- ▶ Pipeline for new Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs) for the County; over 50 CERTs have become EMTs
- ▶ Portable Shelters to provide climate controlled protected environments for first responders
- ▶ Speakers Bureau to bring presentations to the community
- ▶ Stop-the-Bleed® Instructor training for the Fire and Rescue Department
- ▶ Training opportunities for Amateur Radio (Ham Radio) Operators
- ▶ Weather spotters trained by the National Weather Service (Skywarn)

### Community Risk Reduction

CERT supports the Fire Department's efforts to reduce risk in the community through:

- ▶ Distribution of emergency preparedness materials at Outreach events
- ▶ Installation of SmartBurner stove upgrades in at-risk communities
- ▶ Installation of smoke alarms in at-risk communities
- ▶ Partnering with the Fire Department at Hands-Only CPR events
- ▶ Support of First Aid/Lost Child Services at various past events (Herndon Festival and Celebrate Fairfax)

### THE CERT MISSION

To enhance the emergency preparedness of residents through Community Engagement, Operations supporting County and community events, and Training thereby fostering safer, more resilient communities.

### Canteen Support

Canteen 400, a relief vehicle run by CERT, provides hydration and nutrition to Fire, Emergency Medical Services (EMS), and Police personnel at major incidents, investigations, and exercises with trained CERT crews that are ready to respond at all hours.

### COVID Pandemic Support

- ▶ Food Distribution Centers (Food Distribution and Traffic and Crowd Management Support)
- ▶ Grocery Shopping and Pharmacy Pickup for Older Adults – Dept. of Family Services
- ▶ Traffic Management for Vaccination Clinics
- ▶ Sewed and donated face coverings
- ▶ Distributed Childcare Hygiene Kits – Dept. of Neighborhood and Community Services

### Emergency Preparedness Training

- ▶ Amateur Radio Workshops
- ▶ Canteen Operations
- ▶ CERT Basic Training
  - Public Classes – ages 13 and up
  - High School Students
  - Special Needs Students
- ▶ Stop the Bleed®
- ▶ Stroke Smart®
- ▶ Emergency Communications
- ▶ Emergency Preparedness Workshops
- ▶ Emergency Vehicle Operations (EVOC)
- ▶ First Aid/CPR/AED
- ▶ Hands-Only CPR
- ▶ Hazardous Materials
- ▶ Incident Management
- ▶ Infectious Diseases
- ▶ Lifting and Cribbing (Search and Rescue)
- ▶ Psychological First Aid Class and Personal Wellness for First Responders
- ▶ Special Needs Considerations (Autism, Hearing Impairment & Mental Health)
- ▶ Tent Shelter Deployment
- ▶ Traffic and Crowd Management
- ▶ Trailer Operations

## Traffic & Crowd Management

### Fire and Rescue Department Support

- Graduations at the Fire & Rescue Academy (FRA) for Fire Recruit School
- FRA High School Firefighter Family Days
- Fire Department Staff Funerals

### Course Marshals at Races and Parades

- Capital Baptist Church (Annandale) 5K Race
- Fairfax City CASA Run
- Fairfax City Fire Dept 5K Races
- Franconia Kingstowne 5K Race

### Festivals and Community Days

- Fairfax City Fireworks
- Fairfax City Fall Festivals
- Fairfax Station Railroad Museum Holiday Train Shows
- Holy Spirit Catholic Church Carnival
- Lorton 4th of July Fireworks
- Lorton Workhouse Haunted Walk
- McLean Day Festivals
- McLean Earth Day Celebration
- McLean 4th of July Fireworks
- McLean Winterfest
- Parliament Pool District Swim Meet
- Sully Community Center Opening

### Veteran Support

- American Legion Riders Post 176 Motorcycle Rallies
- Fairfax City Rolling to Remember "Ride of Patriots"
- "Wreaths Across America" at Chestnut Grove Cemetery in Herndon

## Community Support

- Interfaith Resilience Conference – Department of Emergency Management & Security
- Fire Station Open Houses
- Food for Others – Thanksgiving food distribution
- Outreach at Police National Night Out
- Outreach at community festivals and events
- Public Safety Days – Communities of Trust Committee (COTC)
- Out of Darkness Walk – American Foundation for Suicide Prevention
- World Police and Fire Games – 2015 Logistical, Admin, and Medical Support

## Recovery Support Services

- Huntington Flood - July 2019
- Centreville Senior Housing Fire Recovery - May 2018

## Victim-Actors for Disaster Exercises

- Fire & Rescue Academy Mass Casualty Training
- Civil Disturbance Training for Police
- Virginia Task Force One (VATF-1)
- Washington Metro Area Transit Authority (WMATA) - Metrorail
- Metropolitan Washington Airport Authority (MWAA) Mass Casualty and EMS Training Drills
- MWAA Canine Training at Dulles and Reagan Airports
- Department of Defense (2014, 2019, 2023)
- Virginia Railway Express (2017)

## Moulage Services for Mock Disaster Exercises and EMT Training

(Make-up artists create mock injuries for victims)

- Fire Department / VATF-1 Mass Casualty Drills
- Law Enforcement Active Shooter Drills
- Fairfax County EMT Training and Exams
- Falls Church Academy for High School EMTs
- Vienna VFD EMT Training
- Northern VA Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Council EMT Exams
- Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority (MWAA) Triennial Mass Casualty Exercise

With CERT support and logistics at **65 events**, County Supervisors distributed over four million pounds of food and **70,000 pounds of pet food to over 100,000 families**

### 2018-2022

<b>1411</b>	<b>69,800</b>	<b>\$2,085,150</b>
Active Volunteers	Total Hours	Service Value

Fairfax County Volunteer Program of the Year  
**2017, 2021, and 2023**

Virginia Governor's Award Volunteerism and Community Service

### 2023 Volunteer Honor Roll

Since 2003, CERT has taught hundreds of classes, to thousands of residents, and provided tens of thousands of volunteer hours.

Trained CERT volunteers know what to do in an emergency while maintaining personal safety.

# The CERT Speakers Bureau

## Community Engagement Division

Kim S.

The CERT Speakers Bureau is part of the Community Engagement Division. The bureau is composed of a small group of knowledgeable and experienced CERT members who are qualified to present information about the CERT program to the general public. The Speakers provide presentations based on the audience needs, usually around topics such as the history of CERT, our local organization, CERT Basic training, emergency preparedness, and the capabilities the CERT brings to serve the community for both planned and unplanned events/emergencies. Speakers also promote the CERT program and recruit new volunteers for CERT Basic Training through their presentations. Most speaking engagements are 30-45 minutes and include time for questions.

Our upcoming speaking engagements include the Welcome Club of Northern Virginia, the Olli Osher Lifelong Learning Institute, and, in collaboration with DC CERT, an online presentation for the Caregiver Support Program of the DC Veterans Association Medical Center.

If you are involved in a group that is interested to learn more about Fairfax County CERT or emergency preparedness, contact [CommunityDeputy@FairfaxCountyCERT.org](mailto:CommunityDeputy@FairfaxCountyCERT.org) for more information.

## Celebrate Safely

### Winter and Early Springtime Activities

Ginny K.

Winter and early springtime bring a number of holidays and activities. It is also a good time to remember safe work practices that you learned in your CERT training.

Many celebrations and activities will bring us outside. Whether you are out planting trees, looking for Punxsutawney Phil, or just gathering with your family to celebrate a religious holiday, be sure to dress appropriately for the weather. Dress in layers, and don't forget the rain/snow gear.

Celebrating in large crowds requires alertness. Remember to watch around you (six sides of the box), and make sure that your group has an emergency plan for alerting each other, getting out, and a meeting place away from the event.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) also applies. During the respiratory illness season, it is wise to bring out your N95/KN95 mask when indoors at crowded events. Watching the solar eclipse? Make sure that you use eclipse glasses that comply with the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) 12312-2.

Food and beverages also play a big role in winter gatherings and observances. Food safety rules do not change during the winter! Check out the CDC website ([cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov)) for tips such as cooking food thoroughly, putting away perishable food within 1 to 2 hours, proper thawing of frozen food and hand washing. Be sure to stay hydrated. Winter weather can dry you out fast. Also, watch out for friends and family (your Team members) when fasting or alcohol is involved.





# Fire Station Open Houses 2023

## CERT Participation in Annual National Fire Prevention Week

Alex V.

October 8th-14th was National Fire Prevention Week and the theme for 2023 was “cooking safety.” Kitchen fires are a primary cause of residential fires. The Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department (FCFRD) scheduled fire station open houses for October 14th. Many county elected officials promoted the event in their e-mail bulletins sent to constituents.

It was cold and rainy as dawn broke on the 14th. But, to paraphrase the U.S. Postal Service motto, ‘neither snow, nor sleet, nor rain’ prevented Marcia R. and me from staffing the CERT Outreach Division info table at the Dunn Loring Volunteer Fire Station #13 event. We were among the 35 county-wide CERT team members who participated at 12 FCFRD fire stations. This was our first time as Outreach volunteers. Any trepidations we had working this event were assuaged by the pre-event planning meeting we participated in that provided a good preview of what we could expect.

Community Engagement and the outreach team provided us with all the information, pamphlets, gear and a display board to give an impressive presentation. Despite the dreary weather at day break, members of the public started showing up once the doors opened. On our shift, we had 66 visitors come through. The majority were young families who brought their children to ‘touch’ the fire apparatus and ambulances and meet an actor costumed as ‘Sparky’ the fire dog. One popular activity was watching the ‘race’ that pitted a paid county firefighter against a volunteer firefighter to see who could don all their break-out gear and Scott breathing apparatus quicker. Among the items we distributed were safety coloring books, family preparedness booklets from OEM, FEMA brochures and CERT information items.

Many visitors wanted info on what type of organization CERT was. Station #13 had several volunteers who were also longtime CERT members. It was very gratifying for Marcia R. and me to see high quality of the people who volunteer as firefighters.



# CERT Trivia Quiz

Test Your Knowledge

Alex V.

## New October Trivia Quiz!

Answers in the April 2024 Edition of the Green Helmet

- 1 In order to prepare for disasters, CERT members should have separate emergency kits for:  
A) Shelter-in-place situations at work  
B) Home  
C) Vehicle  
D) All of the above
- 2 To prevent house fires when using wood stoves and fireplaces, what safety precautions should be followed?  
A) Only use seasoned wood, and never burn paper or trash  
B) Always use a sturdy fireplace screen  
C) Have your chimney inspected once a year and cleaned when necessary  
D) All of the Above
- 3 To prepare for disasters, CERT members should have how many days of supplies and water for each family member, and their pets?  
A) One  
B) Two  
C) Three  
D) Seven
- 4 Fairfax County's emergency alert system (Fairfax Alerts) allows participants to customize their preferences by:  
A) Getting alerts on up to 10 devices  
B) Receive alerts for up to 5 geographic locations (such as home, work, school, etc.)  
C) Choosing weather, traffic and emergency alerts  
D) All of the above

## Answers from July's Green Helmet Trivia Quiz

- 1 Only people who have completed an approved AED/CPR course may use the AED devices...  
**ANSWER:** False - AEDs have verbal prompts to assist users in their proper use once activated.
- 2 Which jurisdiction in the Commonwealth of Virginia has trained the most CERT volunteers?  
**ANSWER:** D) Fairfax County
- 3 Which organization should be contacted first if an untagged stray domestic animal is located?  
**ANSWER:** C) Fairfax County Animal Protection Police
- 4 If a suspected victim of a drug overdose is encountered...CERT member's immediate action?  
**ANSWER:** B) Call 911

# CERT Word Find

Find Words Used in this Newsletter

Kelly O.

Find the following words hidden below:

- Inclement
- Cardiac
- Canteen
- Stroke
- Uniform
- Recruitment
- Capabilities
- Moulage
- Speakers
- Flu
- Apparatus
- Pizza

C	C	A	N	T	E	E	N	P	P	T	U	X	G	H	S	T	F	B
F	L	X	Z	Z	J	G	D	S	N	M	C	Z	V	A	O	I	B	H
S	L	K	S	V	Z	Z	C	R	D	Z	Z	M	O	U	X	N	Z	S
L	K	U	B	N	M	Z	A	P	P	A	R	A	T	U	S	C	X	P
F	L	M	U	Z	S	T	R	O	K	E	K	E	S	A	G	L	N	E
P	O	Q	J	P	I	Z	D	A	P	M	O	U	L	A	G	E	Z	A
N	I	M	N	P	U	N	I	F	O	R	M	S	F	H	G	M	O	K
Y	T	Z	V	C	A	P	A	B	I	L	I	T	I	E	S	E	C	E
P	I	B	Z	S	T	R	C	U	N	I	B	G	F	D	S	N	X	R
R	D	F	R	A	X	R	E	C	R	U	I	T	M	E	N	T	T	S



# Know Your CERT Acronyms!

A Quick Refresher

Kelly O.

**BEFAST**

## Balance Eyes Face Arms Speech Time

Easy acronym to help you spot the signs of a stroke.

**EOC**

## Emergency Operations Center

The physical location at which the coordination of information and resources to support incident management activities takes place.

**SAMPLE**

## Signs and symptoms - Allergies - Medications - Previous Problems - Last food or drink - Events

Used to preform a assessment of medical patients.

**VA-TF1**

## Virginia's Task Force 1

Domestic and international disaster response resource, sponsored by the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department.

## Do You Have Special Skills or Talents?

If you have vocational or recreational skills that might be useful to CERT, contact

**Jeff Katz at**

**[Jeffrey.Katz@FairfaxCounty.gov](mailto:Jeffrey.Katz@FairfaxCounty.gov)**

## Green Helmet Needs You!

Do you enjoy writing, research, photography, communications, PR?  
Then join the Green Helmet team. Your skills are needed.

**Contact: [Newsletter@FairfaxCountyCERT.org](mailto:Newsletter@FairfaxCountyCERT.org)**

## Follow us on Social Media • Go to our Websites

### Social Channels

[@FairfaxCountyCERT](https://www.facebook.com/FairfaxCountyCERT)

### Public Website

[FairfaxCountyCERT.org](https://FairfaxCountyCERT.org)

### CERT Volunteer Website

[CERT.FairfaxCountyCERT.org](https://CERT.FairfaxCountyCERT.org)

# February 2024

Save the Date  
 Training Outreach Operations Planning/Meeting Lead Meetings  
 Fundraiser Not CERT Related (Holidays/Special Days)

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				1 First Day of Black History Month Dulles Airport K9 Decoy Volunteers Training Division Meeting	2	3
4	5 Class 187	6 ASL for Emergency Responders	7 Class 187	8 Incident Management	9 Incident Management	10 Class 187 Final Incident Management Mt Vernon Town Hall
11	12	13 ASL for Emergency Responders	14 Valentine's Day	15 Chuck Luck's Burial at Arlington National Cemetery	16	17
18	19 Presidents' Day	20 ASL for Emergency Responders Monthly Program Meeting	21 Class 188	22 CERT FRD Radio Communications	23	24
25 Radio Team Workshops	26 Class 188	27 ASL for Emergency Responders Emergency Preparedness Workshop	28 Class 188	29 Emergency Preparedness Workshop		



**Chuck Luck** will be buried at Arlington National Cemetery on February 15th at 11 am. Please watch e-mails for further information.

# March 2024

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					1 First Day of Women's History Month	2 Training Division Clean-Up
3	4 Class 188	5	6 Class 188	7	8	9 Stop The Bleed Emergency Communications
10 Daylight Savings Time Starts	11 Class 188	12 Introduction to Hazardous Materials	13 Class 188	14	15	16 Class 188 Final
17 St. Patrick's Day	18 Community Assessment Program	19 Monthly Program Meeting Panera Fundraiser for CERT Association	20	21	22	23 CPR/AED/ First Aid
24 Radio Team Workshops	25 Advanced First Aid	26 Advanced First Aid	27 Advanced First Aid	28	29	30
31 Easter Sunday						

**For More Information and Registration Links Visit:**  
[CERT.FairfaxCountyCERT.org/Calendar](https://CERT.FairfaxCountyCERT.org/Calendar)



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### FROM THE NEWSLETTER TEAM

While we all wish we had journalism degrees to use in the production of this newsletter, we don't. We are volunteers just like you. We appreciate your feedback and input. Look for our upcoming newsletter in **APRIL 2024**

Do you have any questions you want answered? Have a story idea? Read a good CERT-related book you want to recommend? Want to contribute an item? Send them to us at [Newsletter@FairfaxCountyCERT.org](mailto:Newsletter@FairfaxCountyCERT.org). Neighborhood teams – we'd love to hear what you are doing. Let us know!

**More Contact Information**  
[CERT.FairfaxCountyCERT.org/Contacts](https://CERT.FairfaxCountyCERT.org/Contacts)

**Read Previous Editions of The Green Helmet:**  
[CERT.FairfaxCountyCERT.org/Green-Helmet](https://CERT.FairfaxCountyCERT.org/Green-Helmet)