

# International Community Emergency Response Team (iCERT) Society

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The heraldic coat of arms shown represents the society. The following describes the symbols and their meanings:

- The Falcon crest signifies one who does not rest until their objective is achieved
- The Radiance helm signifies spirit of strength and protection
- The Cat supporter signifies liberty, vigilance, forecast and courage
- The Beaver supporter signifies industry and perseverance
- The Golden Bough mantling signifies that the harvest of hope has been secured
- The Fireman's Shield, Entwined Snake and Yellow Cross comprise shield elements

**Mission:** “Champion existing and emerging efforts that promote awareness and participation in the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program.”

**Vision:** “To enhance community disaster resilience through education and public awareness.”

## **Discussion:**

The International Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Society has been established within the National Consortium for Readiness (N-CORE) as a “free and open” forum that promotes the implementation of the CERT program through innovation and information sharing. In addition, the society has laid the foundation for the implementation of two new CERT initiatives.

The Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program was designed to provide a baseline from which to establish neighborhood-based disaster response teams that could be utilized in an auxiliary capacity following a disaster. These teams are trained to a limited extent by professional and semi-professional responders to perform initial damage assessments, basic search and rescue and provide immediate first aid to injured citizens. Although great detail has been taken and resources expended to develop a national capability, the adoption of the program in general has been slow and cumbersome due to the non-availability of the adult community that is required to implement a viable capability. The adult population is primarily engaged in providing quality of life for their families by working each day, grocery shopping, and performing other tasks that are necessary to provide an acceptable standard of living.

The CERT Junior and Teen CERT initiative is designed as an extension of the existing CERT program. It will utilize experienced First Response and Emergency Management personnel to lay the foundation upon which a semi-professional cadre of citizens can properly assist their local communities in enhancing readiness, responding to, recovering from and mitigating future all-hazards incidents in order to reduce loss of life and property.

The CERT Junior and Teen CERT initiative will provide classroom lectures, community training seminars, weekend community drills and exercises, recognition of course completion, and support further implementation through development of training criteria and curriculum, as well as a standardized All-hazards Community Excellence (ACE) award to recognize those actively participating to enhance disaster resilience.