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Nine confirmed tornadoes wreaked havoc on more than three Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex counties the day after Christmas 2015. If Burleson had been among the cities devastated by a tornado, would you know what to do to help your family and your neighbors?

Find out how you can be part of a disaster response team. The Burleson Fire Marshal's office is hosting a 5-day CERT (Community Emergency Response Team) training in March. All classes, except possibly the final class, will be hosted at Fire Station #1, 828 S.W. Alsbury Blvd.

The dates are:

- Tuesday, March 1, 6 p.m.-9:30 p.m., Disaster Preparedness and Fire Safety
- Thursday, March 3, 6 p.m.-9:30 p.m., Disaster Medical Operations
- Tuesday, March 8, 6 p.m.-9:30 p.m., Light Search and Rescue and CERT Organization
- Thursday, March 10, 6 p.m.-9:30 p.m., Disaster Psychology and Terrorism & CERT
- Saturday, March 12, 9 a.m.-1 p.m., Course Review, disaster simulation and final exam

Students will learn how to manage utilities and put out small fires; open airways, control bleeding, and treat for shock; provide basic medical aid; search for and rescue victims safely; organize as a team; and collect disaster intelligence to support first responder efforts.

To be CERT certified you are required to attend all five March classes. If you miss a class, you will have to attend the City's next training in Burleson (or training offered in the surrounding area). You only have to attend the portion that you miss, not all five days.

CERT members are critical in giving support to family, friends, and neighbors in their immediate area until first responders arrive. You do not have to join the team to go through training. Classes are open to citizens of Burleson, or employees of a Burleson business, who are at least 18 years old.

Free CERT training was made available nationally by FEMA in 1993. The CERT concept was developed by the Los Angeles City Fire Department in 1985 with the goal of training citizens and private and government employees. CERT teams have been used to search for lost or kidnapped children, staff emergency operations centers and monitor events, secure emergency operations centers, manage “spontaneous/convergent” volunteers, and assist other relief organizations on mass care. CERT members are also used to distribute disaster education material and provide services at special events. Following a disaster, CERT members are needed to assist with documentation and logistics. Non-disaster related activities include keeping databases, developing a website, writing a newsletter, planning activities, and organizing exercises and activities.

To apply, fill out the CERT application, <http://bit.ly/CERTapplication>, then take it by Fire Station #1, Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-5 p.m. The City will do a background check of all CERT applicants. For more information, go to the CERT page, www.burlesontx.com/CERT or call Fire Inspector/Investigator Jessica Eiswald at 817-426-9177.