



The **Community Emergency Response Team (CERT)** 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. Using the training learned in the classroom and during exercises, CERT members can assist others in their neighborhood or workplace following an event when professional responders are not immediately available to help. CERT members also are encouraged to support emergency response agencies by taking a more active role in emergency preparedness projects in their community.

The City of North Kansas City operates an accredited CERT team. We have numerous members from all walks of life. Each individual brings a different skill set to the team. This is the strength of CERT. All members have received a basic training to ensure a similar level of response in an emergency. However, training is ongoing and requires all members to participate in learning about the Incident Command System sponsored by FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency). We are always seeking individuals who are community service oriented and wish to participate in a volunteer organization that focuses on preparedness in all its forms. From personal, to neighborhood, to city, to state, to helping the entire country better prepare for emergencies.

IT STARTS WITH YOU.

CERT has a history that begins in Los Angeles, California. Fire departments there realized that in major incidents where basic services would be denied to whole

communities, a system must be developed to help citizens become self-sufficient for a period of time until help could respond. The idea of CERT was born. Since then, CERT has undergone several expansions to include what we now call an “all hazards” approach. That means that all CERT’s train to respond to numerous types of emergencies from small to massive. From personal to national. We believe that if you are able to help yourself, then you will be in a position to help others. At the least, you will be part of the solution, not the problem.

The North Kansas City CERT was founded in 2010-2011 by Police Officers Rob Russell and James Ham. Through emergency management training CERT began to take shape. Platte County Sheriff’s Department’s Mike O’Neal played a major role in the development of the organization and training. He continues to be a very important resource to all CERT’s. As other CERT members began to obtain the necessary certifications to train others, NKC CERT took flight. Today, the all hazard approach encompassed by CERT in North Kansas City includes specializations such as Search and Rescue (SAR) and, the Disaster Animal Response Team (DART). Members can deploy specially trained K-9 units and potentially, mounted units in the future.

The North Kansas City CERT continues to evolve and change as we move into the future. We will train to be better tomorrow than we are today. Our community service orientation continues to widen as we participate in an ever expanding venue of operations in our city and others. We help when and where we can. We do the most good for the most people in the shortest amount of time.

If joining this type of organization sounds like something you would be interested in exploring, you can e-mail CERT@NKC.org or mppmnamee@nkc.org. You may also go the North Kansas City web site and click on police department. Then click resource links and click the CERT tab. You will find information and an application to receive CERT training that all potential members or transfers must complete. You may also contact the CERT Coordinator directly by phone at 816- 412-7933. The CERT office is located in the North Kansas City Police Headquarters, 2020 Howell, North Kansas City, Mo. 64116.