

Frequently Asked Questions

I took the CERT course a few years back but I forgot most of what I learned. Can I attend the next CERT Academy?

Yes. The Encinitas Fire Department is aware of the fact that, unlike firefighters and EMS technicians, most of us do not use the skills learned during the CERT course on a daily basis, and are therefore prone to forget some if not most of it. As a result, past CERTs are welcome to attend ongoing CERT Academy classes to refresh their memory as well as their skills. Attending ongoing academies is also a good way to get to know fellow CERTs, which could come in handy in case of disaster.

My son (daughter, nephew, niece) would like to go through the CERT training with me, but he's 14 years old. What's the minimum age?

The minimum age is 18. Some CERTs across the country have developed CERT training programs for teen-agers, and should there be enough demand, one could be set up to meet their needs in Encinitas as well, but so far too few younger citizens have expressed an interest.

Is this training going to cost me anything?

No. The whole course is offered free of charge, courtesy of the Federal Department of Homeland Security. As a bonus, anyone completing the whole course is given a CERT backpack full of tools and goodies, which of course anyone is free to supplement with additional items at their own expense if they .

I am very interested in going through the CERT training, but the schedule you suggest makes it impossible for me to attend all classes. What should I do?

Let us know about your predicament, and we will try to find a solution to accommodate your needs. Everyone is busy and it is very difficult to set up training academies that can be attended by everyone. Most CERT training around the country takes place over an extended period of time, usually 8 weeks, allowing people to stretch their attendance. Encinitas has chosen (so far) instead to cram the training into a 2-week period, which works for some and not for others. We are discussing with the Fire Department how to best address this issue and hope to be able to offer alternate formulas in the future. Your feedback will help. Let us know what you need in this respect by using our contact page.

I'd love to take the CERT training, but I don't have the time. Still, I would like to be as prepared as I can. What do you suggest I do?

At the very least, you should stock on water and non-perishable food for you and your family.

Rule of thumb No 1: each person needs 1 gallon of water per day for all his/her needs (including hygiene). Do the math: 4 people = 4 gallons x 7 days = 28 gallons.

Rule of thumb No 2: have enough food for 7 days. In the event of a large-scale disaster, no one knows how long it will take for communication to be re-established and fresh food to be brought in. If you buy cans, be sure to buy only the ones that have a date on them.