

## **CERT HURRICANE CONFERENCE 2008**

**Location: St. Petersburg College**

**Dates: May 30 & 31**

**Fri. Night- Welcome message delivered by Capt. Larry Thompson**

**1. Mr. Craig Fugate, Director, FL Division of Emergency Management**

**a. We were given some background on a worse case scenario comparing it to the hurricane of 1926. Population was much less than now and it is estimated that up to 2,000,000 people could be homeless if a comparable hurricane hit today. Search and rescue could take 1 1/2 weeks before all areas are reached. There would be no food, power or sewers. "Victims" are those that are lost, if you live you are a "survivor". We all need to be responsible for ourselves and that means PREPARE TO SURVIVE.**

**b. Area CERT Teams would be invaluable in the time directly following a disaster when First Responders cannot reach all areas. Must have constant training and a plan that can be implemented during this time. Communications, search and rescue (people who can survive their injuries) 24 hours to reach injured, get victims stabilized, transport if possible, meet basic needs. The problems define the needs. We can stabilize our own areas and account for residents. It was suggested that traffic control could be an important part of a plan.**

**2. Gotta Have a Plan- Sally Bishop, Director, PCEM**

**A Survival Guide specific to Pinellas County will be coming out next week. Implement your plan when we are in a "Watch". Are you leaving and if not can you get to a high and dry area? Do you have family, friends you can go to? Do you have a contact person that others will get in touch with for info. on your well being and location? Going to a shelter is a last resort. Call 888 689-8905 from cell phone and enter zip code for emergency info. \* Pinellas County has a need for amateur radio operators, contact Capt. Larry of Lealman to sign up. At least one week of supplies is recommended.**

**3. Nature's Fury: Hurricanes- Ben Nelson, State Meteorologist, FL Div. Emerg. Mngmt.**

**Florida was named the Blue Roof State because of the blue tarps used. There is a disaster response pyramid- starting from the top down--Fed., State, Local, First Responders, Red Cross/Salvation Army, Citizens Corps./CERT, Family Preparedness. \*Get a Plan! 100 divided by the forward speed of hurricane will give potential rainfall. Normally tornadoes will form in the right front quadrant of storm up to 100 miles away. Oct. Nov. is the high season.**

**Sat. 5-31**

**Course Offerings: 1 hour 45 mins.**

**1. Points of Distribution - Covered the basic set-up and operations of a Point of Distribution (POD). PODs are utilized after a disaster to provide basic needs to survivors such as food and water. After classroom discussion we met outside to see the trucks used to transport supplies. While outside we discussed whether our location would be acceptable for a POD. It was suggested that we have signs made up in advance of a disaster that may be needed. (see pictures)**

**2. Chain Saw and Safety Operations- Following a tropical event , chain saws are one of the most useful tools in response and recovery. This exercise covered the safe basic operation of chain saws.**

**Breakout Sessions: 45 mins.**

**1. Damage Assessment- Damage Assessments are important in knowing what resources are needed and where.**

**a. Rapid Assessment**

**Life saving needs, imminent hazards and critical lifelines**

**b. Preliminary Damage Assessment**

**Dollar amount put on damages**

**c. Combined Verification**

**Detailed inspection of damages to individual sites**

**2. Basic Communications- Focused on methods of communication used from birth to death, verbal and non verbal. Communicating a message is the departing or interchange of thoughts, opinions or information by speech, writing or signs. (TV, telephone, telegraph, radio, hand signals or anything else that works) First, think about the desired message you want to impart using proper diction.**

**3. Busting Hurricane Myths- The dangers of some commonly held beliefs when hurricanes approach.**

**4. They're Coming From Everywhere- After disasters unaffiliated volunteers will want to help but many times this influx of meaningful people will lead to creating a bigger problem. Focus will be on utilizing these people as a force multiplier for CERT teams and the safe management of these volunteers.**

**5. What About Fido?- Explore the many angles and issues in dealing with pets during and after a disaster.**

**6. Where Are The Signs?- Everything has been devastated, nothing is the same. Create a neighborhood plan for meeting after a disaster. Have fuel, batteries, GPS, spray paint, solar panel for recharging batteries. Landmarks, street signs, lights all gone. Know who has gone to shelter or have evacuated area. Identify special needs people and have a plan to help them. Keep a current map and utilize standard grid system. New landmarks, identify neighborhood fixtures, ditches, hydrants etc. Paint addresses on curbs or houses (needed for insurance adjusters and First Responders), use GPS to identify roads and mark them, mark dangers, turn off utilities if necessary.**

**7. I Don't Feel So Good- Focus on issues that the poison control center in your area deals with following a disaster.**