

DEVELOPING A COMMUNITY EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM TO SUPPORT THE
COPPELL FIRE DEPARTMENT

EXECUTIVE ANALYSIS OF FIRE SERVICE OPERATIONS IN EMERGENCY
MANAGEMENT

BY: JAMES R. KITCHENS

COPPELL FIRE DEPARTMENT
COPPELL, TEXAS

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ABSTRACT

Repeatedly over the past years, major disasters have overwhelmed emergency response agencies. On September 11, 2001, the largest city in the United States was overwhelmed by a terrorist act. New York, which has the largest police and fire departments, was overwhelmed within a few hours. Both man-made and natural disasters strike with little or no warning. When these disasters occur, local citizens expect their local emergency services to respond to their needs. Due to the magnitude of some disasters, local emergency services cannot meet these needs.

The purpose of this research project was first to examine the need for a Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) in the City of Coppell, and secondly to determine how the CERT team should be structured. An evaluative research approach was applied to address the problem. Data was gathered through interviews, literature reviews, and a survey. The research questions were:

1. What conditions exist in Coppell that could overwhelm the Coppell Fire Department, and/or isolate the public from emergency service delivery in the first 24 hours after a major event?
2. What curriculum would be included in CERT training to assure that volunteers are adequately prepared?
3. Would the community support a CERT program?
4. What steps need to be taken to implement a CERT program in Coppell, Texas?

This research project utilized the review of literature pertaining to CERT programs, personal interviews with leaders of volunteer groups active in the City of Coppell, and city

officials that work with these groups.

A survey was sent to 78 active members of the Citizen Police Academy and the Coppell Amateur Radio Club to collect information on citizen participation.

The results of this research indicated that the agencies in the vicinity of Coppell have worked to maintain a high level of interdepartmental cooperation through the use of mutual aid agreements, automatic aid agreements, and a shared resources agreement. But with all this cooperation, these departments can be overwhelmed by most disasters. In anticipation of future disasters, a Community Emergency Response Team is needed in the City of Coppell. The research showed a CERT program would be highly supported by the citizens. A conceptual design for a CERT program will be recommended to the City Management Staff for implementation.

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INTRODUCTION

The Coppel Fire Department (CFD) is adequately staffed and equipped to handle emergencies that routinely occur within the City. The department is diversified in fire fighting, public education, environmental health, rescue procedures, emergency medicine, building inspections, and emergency management activities. The department also specializes in trench and confined space rescue. Despite this diversification, like many other public service organizations, the CFD can quickly be overwhelmed by a large-scale disaster preventing it from providing adequate service to all citizens in a timely manner. For example, a large tornado can cut a mile wide path of destruction through Coppel and surrounding municipalities, whom Coppel shares Mutual Aid Agreements with. This event would overwhelm not only resources in Coppel, but in the surrounding municipalities as well.

Following a major disaster, first responders who provide fire and medical services will not be able to meet the demand for these services. Factors such as number of victims, communication failures, and road blockages will prevent people from accessing emergency services they have come to expect at a moment's notice through 911. People will have to rely on each other for help in order to meet their immediate life saving and life-sustaining needs (Emergency Management Institute, 2003b).

The purpose of this study was to complete an applied research project that might benefit the City of Coppel, promote a comprehensive and a multi-hazard risk reduction plan led by the fire service, and relate to Executive Analysis of Service Operations in Emergency Management Class, which is a part of the Executive Fire Officer Program at the National Fire Academy.

The evaluative research methodology used included a literature review, personal

interviews, and a survey of citizens who belonged to volunteer groups within the city. The specific research questions used are as follows:

1. What conditions exist in Coppell that could overwhelm the emergency service providers, and/or isolate the public from emergency service delivery in the first 24 hours after a major event?
2. What elements would be included in CERT training to assure that volunteers are adequately prepared?
3. Would the community support a CERT program?
4. What steps need to be taken to implement a CERT in Coppell, Texas?

BACKGROUND AND SIGNIFICANCE

The City of Coppell provides a variety of emergency services to a community of 40,000 citizens. The geographical service area of 11.5 square miles in size has a master plan to develop three equal parts of residential, commercial and park area. Currently the residential and park developments are ahead of the commercial development.

The city is strategically located in close proximity to the Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport (DFW). DFW is a major transportation and shipping facility; ranked among the most utilized and largest air transportation facilities in the world. The north/east boundary of DFW is adjacent to the City of Coppell. Additionally, two major ground transportation routes, Interstate 635 and State Highway 121, also border the City. Both provide direct access to DFW Airport and the north Dallas business district.

Coppell has experienced tremendous growth from a small farming community of 200 in

the mid 1970's, to a current population of 40,000. The City of Coppell grew rapidly as people from surrounding communities learned of the potential the city possessed. The expansion has provided the city with a very professional and well-educated population. The citizens of Coppell, as a community, have one of the highest average education levels per household in the area and are continuing to rise. As a result, the citizens expect a high level of service from community services.

The CFD is considered by many to be a state of the art facility. CFD provides fire protection, emergency medical service, environmental health services, building inspection, and emergency management activities for the City of Coppell. Also, CFD provides trench and confined space rescue services for the Cities of Grapevine, Lewisville, Irving, Flower Mound, Carrollton, Farmers Branch, and Addison. The department consists of 66 personnel operating from three stations and one administration building. Each fire station has one fire apparatus and one Mobile Intensive Care Unit (MICU). The minimum staffing per day is 16, and the maximum is 20.

The CFD current average response time is less than five minutes to all emergency calls for service within the City (Coppell Fire Department, 2002). This, coupled with the changes of the fire service to meet the needs of the community, has created a false sense of security in the community. City officials have also developed the attitude that the fire department is adequately staffed and equipped to provide an acceptable level of service to the city. While this is true on a day-to-day basis, it does not hold true during a large-scale disaster such as a tornado. The response time during a disaster could change from minutes to hours or days according to the scale of the disaster.

It is not feasible or cost effective for the CFD to be staffed or equipped to handle a disaster alone. As in the past, the CFD can take a proactive approach to the problem. This author will decide, through this research, if implementing a CERT Program would be beneficial to the City of Coppell. Researching activities of this type are directly related to my last class, Executive Analysis of Fire Service Operations in Emergency Management, attended at the National Fire Academy. There, the use of volunteer organizations, such as CERT, was used to help expedite assistance to stranded civilians in the scenarios.

There is a myth that people respond to disasters in a disorganized and disoriented way. Widespread panic is far from what actually takes place. Most civilians act rationally under the prevailing conditions (Drabek, 1991). It is expected that under disaster conditions people will try to help people, as was the case in a Mexico earthquake. Citizens of Coppell are no different from other citizens in other cities, and they will do their best to help each other.

LITERATURE REVIEW

A literature review was conducted using the National Fire Academy's Learning Resource Center, the Internet, personal interviews, and a survey. Information was obtained from organizations associated with the fire service, as well as some organizations not associated with the fire service. Research which reinforced the benefit of developing and implementing a Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program was reviewed.

The City of Coppell, due to its location, is susceptible to many man-made and natural disasters. Coppell is located in the southern tip of tornado alley creating a high threat level for tornadoes and severe storms every spring and summer.

Texas is ranked first in the numbers of tornadoes and tornado related deaths between 1950-1995 with more than 5,490 tornadoes causing innumerable injuries and more than 500 deaths. This is an average of 124 tornadoes a year; of which 29 are considered violent (National Weather Service, 2003). If combined, the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex would be the tenth largest state in the United States of America, and the 23rd largest country in the world, making it a prime target for terrorist activities (Robert Kruse, personal communication, December 19, 2002).

The City of Irving, Texas borders the southern boundary of Coppell. Irving is the home of the Dallas Cowboys, Dallas Stars hockey team, Boy Scouts of America, and many world wide corporations, too many to mention in the project (Kitchens, 2002a). The Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport borders Coppell on the southwest boundary. It is one of the busiest airports in the country. There were 837,779 airline flights at this airport in the year 2000 (Kitchens, 2002b). Many of these flights were over the City of Coppell, increasing the risk of an aircraft related disaster.

There are two major dams within 10 miles of Coppell. The spillways from both dams flow through Coppell and connect to the Trinity River within the boundaries of Coppell creating the possibility of a major flood event. In 1991 the flood waters spilled out of these spillways for more than two miles into the center of Coppell. If a flood were to occur today, thousands of citizens would be displaced. It is clear to see that many conditions exist in Coppell that could overwhelm the CFD and possibly isolate the public from emergency service delivery for many hours.

CERT is a program designed to help citizens help themselves as well as support local recovery efforts. Citizens can learn to reduce injury, death, and property damage during major

disasters (Wells, 1999a). During disasters, family members, fellow employees, and neighbors will try to help each other. This occurred during an earthquake in Mexico City. Untrained spontaneous volunteers saved 800 lives, however, 100 of the volunteers lost their lives attempting to save others. This loss is preventable through training (Emergency Management Institute, 2003a). Also, training will help to reduce or eliminating panicking. Providing accurate knowledge to the public reduces the risk of panic (Elliott, 2002).

There are different approaches to developing a curriculum for a CERT training program. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has developed a standard curriculum for communities to follow. These classes are seven, two and one-half hour sessions covering the following subjects:

- Session 1 Disaster Preparedness: Participants learn the basics of disaster preparedness. The course covers family preparedness, then expands to the participant's role as a disaster worker.
- Session 2 Disaster fire suppression: Participants are briefly introduced to fire chemistry, hazardous materials, fire hazards, and fire suppression strategies as it relates to the use of fire extinguishers, sizing up the situation, controlling utilities, and extinguishing small fires.
- Session 3 Disaster Medical Operations Part I: Participants learn the basics of simple triage and rapid treatment of airway obstruction, bleeding, and shock.
- Session 4 Disaster Medical Operations Part II: Participants learn to treat patients who do not have life threatening injuries. How to set up a treatment area, basic first aid, and general medical operations are explored during this session.

- Session 5 Light Search and Rescue Operations: Participants are taught rescuer safety, basic search and rescue, planning, size-up of rescue incidents, and victim removal.
- Session 6 Disaster Psychology and Team Organization: Participants learn to recognize signs and symptoms of the post-disaster emotional environment. It addresses CERT organization and management principles and the need for documentation.
- Session 7 Course Review and Disaster Simulation: Participants review a final exam and participate in a simulated exercise where they practice the skills they have learned.

The class should be given over a seven-week period so volunteers can make plans around their work schedules. It is recommended that participants be required to bring safety equipment (gloves, goggles, mask) as well as disaster supplies (bandages, flashlight, dressing, batteries) to use in each session. By acquiring these items, participants will begin to build a disaster response kit for future use (Federal Emergency Management Agency, 1994).

Some cities such as Los Angeles and Cathedral, California, Lake Oswego, Oregon were the first to customize their own CERT program (Grimes, 1999). The Los Angeles City Fire Department (LAFD) originally considered the same approach that the Japanese used to create their CERT program. They used a single function approach to develop the skills of citizens. Each member of the team was then trained in one skill, such as emergency medicine, search and rescue, communications, or fire control. The LAFD decided this approach could possibly limit the ability of the city to have the appropriate resources at the scene to conduct a good response

for any given disaster. The LAFD decided to include volunteers with multiple skills in their response program. The LAFD developed the seven-session course that has become the FEMA course described before. The difference is that FEMA's course is a generic course where Los Angeles' course is customized to fit their biggest threat of earthquakes (Minor, 1996). The LAFD CERT program has expanded and now includes three certification levels; basic, intermediate, and advanced. The basic certification requires a volunteer to attend the first seven classes. The second intermediate level, requires a volunteer to possess the basic certification and attend classes on disaster services, mass care, and shelter operations courses. To obtain the advanced level, a volunteer must possess the intermediate level and attend the 50 plus hours of Emergency Response Advance first aid course. The American Red Cross instructs all intermediate and advanced courses (CERT-LA, 2003). In this author's opinion, the Los Angeles CERT is one of the most comprehensive CERT programs in the United States.

The San Francisco Fire Department (SFFD) developed a CERT program patterned after the LAFD program. The SFFD program is called Neighborhood Emergency Response Team program (NERT). The NERT teams are trained to use a decentralized decision making process because of the greater threat of earthquakes in San Francisco. Another responsibility of this group is to establish neighborhood staging areas that serve as a meeting place for volunteers.

The Orlando, Florida Fire Department designed a CERT program which became the East Coast model. This program was modeled after the LAFD program that is known as the West Coast model. The main difference is the focus on hurricanes instead of earthquakes. Some members of the Orlando CERT program were sent to the Federal emergency Management Institute in Maryland for Train-the-Trainer training (Wells, 1999 b).

If disaster assistance is requested from the State of Texas, a community is required to send in a damage assessment report within 24 hours (Kruse, 2002).

The importance of the initial local assessment cannot be over emphasized. Since speed and accuracy are essential in obtaining the maximum amount of help in the shortest amount of time, established workable procedures and trained personnel should be in place beforehand. This should begin with a team of personnel trained in damage assessment (Millwee, 2002).

Training CERT members in damage assessment provides a community the avenue to get that information into the EOC in a fast and accurate way.

According to Joseph McCluan, Emergency Management Coordinator for Seminole County Florida, the first few hours after a disaster is the most difficult for any agency. The emergency responders are overwhelmed and communications are stretched if not down completely. In the field, CERT members become the eyes and ears for the community in areas where emergency services are unable to respond quickly. The addition of an amateur radio class to the CERT program, greatly improves communications into the affected area. Critical information such as the number of victims and damage assessment information could be relayed to emergency management personnel during the first few hours of the event. Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service (RACES) members are trained in emergency communications. Since they have set procedures for reporting information, they handle all communications for CERT members during an event. RACES members in the EOC then forward the information directly to the EOC operators. (Joseph McCluan telephone interview, January 29, 2003). According to Harry M. Jacobs, Assistant City Radio Officer for the City of Los Angeles, the Fire Chief

authorizes the enrollment of up to 500 amateur radio operators to assist the fire department and the Los Angeles CERT members (Jacobs, 2002).

To gain information about community support, a ten-question survey was sent to volunteer groups in the City of Coppell, Citizen's Police Academy Alumni (CCPA) and the Coppell Amateur Radio Club (CARC). (See Appendix B) Out of 112 surveys 72 were returned, 53 indicated they would join a CERT team if one were created. In a personal interview with Tom Sawyer, president of the CCPA, it was discovered that he was currently researching CERT programs for the possibility of starting a program in Coppell. He stated several of the members of CCPA wanted to start a CERT program, and would be heavily involved. The CCPA has grown from 14 members to 88 members in less than three years. This organization works with the Coppell Police Department, Boy Scouts of America, Coppell Chamber of Commerce, and the Coppell Independent School District, just to mention a few. Mr. Sawyer believes Coppell needs to implement a CERT program, and that it will no doubt be successful (Sawyer, Tom, personal communication, January 07, 2003).

In a personal interview Don Thomas, president of the CARC, said he believes a CERT program would be very successful in Coppell. Members of CARC would attend classes to become CERT members, assist other CERT members with communications, and provide instructors for both amateur radio classes and emergency communication procedures (Thomas, Don, personal communication, December 16, 2002).

Implementation of a CERT program in Coppell, Texas requires developing a plan of action from the ground up. FEMA recommends the program goals that CERT will meet and the resources available to conduct the program. Next, obtain approval from elected officials to use

CERT as a means to teach citizens how to care for themselves during a disaster, especially when local emergency services may not be adequate. Next, recruit potential participants from the community, select and train instructors, then conduct the CERT classes. After the participants complete their training, exercise and refresher courses should be developed (Emergency Management Institute, 2003d).

In summary, the reviewed literature emphasized that any community's emergency service organization, regardless of size, can overwhelm and deplete resources. The information also revealed that a well planned and implemented CERT program will be advantageous to a community. The CFD will look at research, federal standards, and department goals to develop a strategic plan for implementing a comprehensive CERT program, which includes disaster preparedness, disaster fire suppression, disaster medical operations, light search and rescue, disaster psychology, team organization, utility control, and disaster communications.

PROCEDURES

This research project used evaluative methodology to (a) examine methods of determining the need for a CERT program in Coppell, Texas; (b) examine any standards relating to CERT programs; (c) examine what curriculum is contained in other CERT programs; (d) examine what steps should be used to develop a CERT program in Coppell, Texas. The procedures used to complete this project include a literature review, a survey of local citizen groups, several personal interviews, and a review of the CFD response records, hazard analysis and emergency management plan.

Literature Review

The literature review began at the National Fire Academy's Learning Resource Center (LCR) in September of 2002. This review continued with items from the CFD training library. Trade journals, magazines and textbooks that contained information on disaster planning and CERT programs were also used in this research project.

All personal interviews used in this project targeted individuals involved in either CERT programs or citizen volunteer groups within the city of Coppell. These interviews were conducted between December 2002 and January 2003. (See Appendix A)

Citizen Organization Survey

A feedback instrument (Appendix B) was developed then distributed to 112 members of the Citizen's Police Academy of Coppell and the Coppell Amateur Radio Club, 72 surveys were returned. The survey consisted of six questions and was designed to give the CFD answers about citizen support for a CERT program (See Appendix C). Descriptive statistics calculated and interpreted the feedback instrument. Specifically, the raw numbers and the percentages are reported.

Review of Coppell Fire Department Records

A review of the CFD records was conducted between November 2002 and January 2003. The review targeted disaster response and hazard analysis. Data was gathered on average response time for the Coppell Fire Department.

Assumptions and Limitations

It was assumed that all survey questions and interview questions would be answered with factual responses. Participation in the feedback instrument represents a small percentage of all citizens living in the City of Coppell. All interviews represent a small percentage of cities across

the United States.

TERMS

Community Emergency Response Team - Citizen teams trained to perform a task in an emergency when no public safety personnel are available in order to reduce the loss of life and property.

Disaster - A disaster is an occurrence such as a hurricane, tornado, flood, earthquake, or other situation that causes human suffering or created human needs that the victims cannot alleviate without assistance.

Amateur Radio - A specific band or radio frequency spectrum allocated by the US government to licenses radio operators who assist local and national government agencies during emergencies.

Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service (RACES) - Established in 1952 as a special phase of Amateur Radio service designed to provide emergency communications to state and local governments when normal communications are down or overloaded.

Mutual Aid - A beneficial agreement between two or more parties that is reciprocal, voluntary, and/or compensated by some means.

Trench Rescue Team - A specially trained team designed to mitigate a rescue in collapsed trenches.

RESULTS

Research Questions 1: What conditions exist in Coppell that could overwhelm the Coppell Fire Department, and/or isolate the public from emergency service delivery in the first 24 hours after a major event? Coppell is located in what is known as Tornado Alley. Along with

the threat of tornadoes, is the threat of damaging thunderstorms. A tornado could isolate citizens for 24 to 72 hours depending on the severity of the tornado. Coppell is also located next to DFW Airport, the North Dallas Business District, and Irving, Texas, home to the Dallas Cowboys and Dallas Stars sports organizations. There were more than 830,000 flights in and out of DFW last year, thousands of them over Coppell. A large aircraft crashing into a Coppell residential area could easily isolate citizens from a quick response by emergency services. Because of the notoriety of the Cowboys and Stars, they are always on the alert for terrorist activities. Both of the clubs practice facilities are less than one mile from Coppell. There are two major dams within ten miles of Coppell. Spillways from both dams flow through Coppell, emptying into the Trinity River at the eastern city limits, creating a severe flood potential.

Research Questions 2: What curriculum would be included in CERT training to assure that volunteers are adequately prepared? Most CERT programs either adopt the FEMA standard class selection, or customize that program to fit the needs of their city. Cities on the west coast of the United States incorporated some aspects of earthquake preparedness, while cities on the east coast incorporated hurricane preparedness. In Seminole County Florida, officials have requested CERT members obtain an amateur radio license to increase the communication capability of CERT members during disasters. Team members can then report conditions at the scene in a more efficient and expedient manner. With training, CERT members can send in damage reports, allowing the emergency management staff to compile necessary reports.

Research Questions 3: Would the community support a CERT program? A feedback instrument (Appendix B) was developed and distributed to 112 members of the Coppell Citizen's Police Academy and Coppell Amateur Radio Club, 72 were returned. The survey consisted of 10 questions and was designed to give CFD answers about citizen participation in a

CERT program. (See Appendix C)

Research Questions 4: What steps need to be taken to implement a CERT program in Coppell, Texas? FEMA recommends a four-step plan of action. First, establish goals that the program will meet, then locate the resources to meet those goals. Secondly, obtain approval from elected officials to use CERT to teach citizens how to care for themselves during a disaster. Third, recruit participants from the community, train instructors, and begin classes. Fourth, after participants complete classes, conduct exercises and refresher courses to maintain interest and skill levels.

DISCUSSION

The results of this study revealed the City of Coppell Fire Department is not unique when confronted with a major disaster. Other fire service organizations across the nation, regardless of size, indicate they would be overwhelmed quickly by a major disaster. The study also indicated an urgent need to develop a CERT program in the Coppell Fire Department. The information obtained in the literature review, survey and personal interviews provide a sufficient amount of data to analyze the topic and formulate recommendations concerning a citizen based CERT program.

CERT trained individuals can have a more dramatic impact on reducing the loss of life and damage to property, as compared to untrained civilians. After taking a basic CERT course, a CERT member is qualified to perform approximately 95% of needed emergency services. This interprets to 95% of the rescues and lifesaving first-aid procedures that are more likely to occur

within the first 24 hours (Himes, 2002a). After completing the CERT training, civilians are better informed on how to help themselves and reduce injury, death and property damage (Wells, 1999a).

The standard curriculum was developed by FEMA after studying the LAFD program. The Emergency Management Institute (EMI) and the National Fire Academy adopted and improved the program (Himes, 2002b). The following are the basic seven classes:

- Session 1 Disaster Preparedness
- Session 2 Disaster Fire Suppression
- Session 3 Disaster Medical Operations part one
- Session 4 Disaster Medical Operations part two
- Session 5 Light Search and Rescue
- Session 6 Disaster Psychology and Team Organization
- Session 7 Course Review and Disaster Simulation

These seven basic classes can be customized to fit communities' needs. For example, cities on the west coast place a higher degree of importance on earthquake preparedness, where as cities on the east coast tend to concentrate more on hurricane preparedness. The LAFD has developed additional curriculum that participants can take to receive an intermediate and advanced level of CERT training (CERT-LA, 2003). In a telephone interview with Joseph McCluan, Emergency Management Coordinator for Seminole County, Florida, stated offering amateur radio classes to CERT members increased enthusiasm among team members. Amateur radio classes improved communications for CERT members while in the field and improved the county RACES program. CERT members who become RACES members learn very structured communication

procedures, creating a very efficient line of communications during disasters. McCluan also said that CERT members are trained on how to run a rehabilitation unit (REHAB) at fire scenes. CERT members now respond on all second alarm fires and establish a REHAB section to help monitor and care for exhausted firefighters. Another advantage to this program is that firefighters and CERT members become used to working with each other before a disaster strikes.

Implementation of a CERT program in Coppell, Texas will require developing a plan of action from the ground up. This author believes the approach taken by the LAFD is the approach that should be taken by the CFD. A strategic plan to implement a comprehensive CERT program that includes disaster preparedness, disaster fire suppression, disaster medical operations, light search and rescue, disaster psychology, team organization, utility control, and disaster communications should be developed.

CERT is about readiness, people helping people, rescuer safety, and doing the greatest good for the greatest number. CERT is a positive and realistic approach to emergency and disaster situations where citizens will be initially on their own and their actions can make a difference. Through training, citizens can manage utilities and put out small fires; treat the three killers by opening airways, controlling bleeding, and treating shock; provide basic medical aid; search for and rescue victims safely; and organize themselves and spontaneous volunteers to be effective (Emergency Management Institute, 2003c).

Over the next two years, EMI hopes to double the number of trained CERT members to more than 400,000. The Train-the-Trainer will also be expanded (Corps, 2003). In his State of the Union Address (January 29, 2002), President George Bush requested all Americans serve their nation the equivalent of two years (4,000 hours) during their lifetime. He announced the

formation of a new service called the USA Freedom Corps. This is an effort to involve citizen volunteers, and improve community services (Himes, 2002c). This request by President Bush will be used to attract volunteers interested in performing a national service.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Like many other agencies, CFD has been, and will probably be in the future, overwhelmed by major disasters. The CFD recognizes the importance of a well-trained citizenship. During the past two years, emergency management officials produced training segments on the local television channel instructing citizens on how to best prepare for a disaster. During research it was discovered that a well-organized CERT program could improve the response to a major disaster. It was also discovered that Coppell has gone through a very rapid growth during the past decade. This expansion, coupled with the current conditions relative to terrorism, has created a situation that is no longer acceptable within the CFD. The creation of a CERT program can considerably reduce the effects of an uninformed public and the actions they may take during a disaster. During disasters such as flooding, tornadoes, acts of terrorism, and air disasters, the CFD will be overwhelmed. It will be impossible for emergency services to reach everyone in the manner they are accustomed to. The formation of a CERT program will help the community effectively deal with disaster situations, with a more informed and better prepared community.

It is recommended that the CFD develop a comprehensive CERT program that meets the needs of the Coppell emergency response plans to natural and mad-made disasters. Due to the success of the LAFD program, a three level program with basic, intermediate, and advanced level certification will be established. The first step will be the formation of a Project Team. This

team will need to educate and gain support of city staff and elected officials, create a time line for program implementation, research the curriculum best suited for Coppell, and design a marketing plan to recruit the best possible members as some of the first steps. Fire department members and volunteers need to attend the Train-the-Trainer course offered by EMI and the State of Texas. As with any new project, the team will need to research and incorporate a budget for the 2003-2004 budget year. The cost of the program will be included in the Emergency Management Program budget. Items such as overtime for instructors will be incorporated in the overtime budget of the Fire Department budget.

The emergency management master plan for the City of Coppell is a living document, as will be the CERT program. Both programs will be an all hazards approach to the safety and well being of the community of Coppell. As the threats, both natural and man made, change in the future, both the Emergency Management Plan and CERT program will need to change to meet these threats. This author believes over the next decade almost every city will have a Community Emergency Response Team of some kind. The names of these organizations, CRT, CERT, DART, or NERT, may change, but the theme will remain the same, people helping people.

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Appendix A
Personal Communications

- Tom Sawyer Tom Sawyer is the President of the Citizen's Police Academy Alumni Association. He has been involved with the program from its inception. Mr. Sawyer is currently working with the Texas State Office for Corporation for National and Community Service.
- Don Thomas Don Thomas is the President of the Coppell Amateur Radio Club, RACES Radio Officer for the City of Coppell, and a member of the Coppell Special Events Committee. Don represents the City of Coppell at all county and state emergency communications meetings. He currently holds a General Amateur Radio License, and has been active in amateur radio for 34 years.
- Robert Kruse Robert Kruse has been Emergency Management Coordinator for the City of Coppell for the past eight years. He has been in the fire service for more than 25 years. His entire career has been in the North Texas area.

Appendix B
National Fire Academy
Survey of Members of the Coppel Citizen Police Academy & Coppel Amateur Radio Club

DIRECTIONS: Please answer the following questions about a Citizen Emergency Response Team (CERT) and how it may be structured.

5. How long have you been a member of this organization? _____

6. Do you believe this organization has benefitted the host department? _____

7. Do you believe this organization has benefitted the City? _____

8. Would you participate in a Citizen Emergency Response Team (CERT)? _____

If yes, which of the following do you feel should be included in the curriculum:.

_____ Search and Rescue _____ RACES Storm Spotting _____ Utility Control

_____ Damage Assessment _____ Communications (Amateur Radio License)

_____ Emergency First Aid _____ Neighborhood Accountability Program

1. Do you feel all emergency volunteer groups should be placed under one large City volunteer organization, then subdivided into categories like Police, Fire, CERT, and RACES? _____

2. What do you consider Coppel's biggest potential threat(s)? _____

Appendix C
Answers to Survey Questions

1. How long have you been a member of this organization?
44 0-5 years 13 5-10 years 11 10-15 years 4 Over 15
2. Do you believe this organization has benefitted the host department?
72 Yes 0 No
3. Do you believe this organization has benefitted the City?
72 Yes 0 No
4. Would you participate in a Citizen Emergency Response Team (CERT)?
53 Yes 10 No 9 Unknown

If yes, which of the following do you feel should be included in the curriculum:.

- | | |
|---|---|
| Search and Rescue - 68 checks | RACES Storm Spotting - 38 checks |
| Utility Control - 57 checks | Damage Assessment - 48 checks |
| Communications (Amateur Radio License) - 46 | |
| Emergency First Aid- 66 | Neighborhood Accountability Program - 53 Checks |

9. Do you feel all emergency volunteer groups should be placed under one large City volunteer organization, then subdivided into categories like Police, Fire, CERT, and RACES?
41 Yes 10 No 21 Unknown
10. What do you consider Coppel's biggest potential threat(s)?
(Several surveys had more than one answer listed for this question)

| | |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| Tornadoes - 48 | Terrorist Attack - 11 |
| Plane Crash -29 | Natural Disaster - 3 |
| Apathy from Citizens - 3 | Technological Disaster - 2 |