



Why Become an Emergency Volunteer?

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Whether it's an entire city or one sick child who needs help, much of the vital public health work before, during or after disasters is made possible by volunteers who quickly learn how good it feels to help others.

How Can I Help?

Emergency Volunteers help people prevent, prepare for, and respond to emergencies. Agencies involved in emergency response offer a variety of volunteer opportunities. Training is usually offered for free. Here are examples of what Emergency Volunteers may do:

- **Disaster Services:** Volunteers respond to state and national disasters.
- **Disaster Action Team:** Volunteers respond to single-family fires with a disaster action team supervisor.
- **Disaster Clerical:** Volunteers assemble class packets, stamp brochures, and distribute disaster safety information in neighborhoods.
- **Youth Volunteers/Programs:** Youth are encouraged to volunteer answering phones, doing office work, help with mailings, preparing materials for classes and computer data entry.
- **Health and Safety Instructor:** Volunteers teach community as well as preschool and elementary school classes in CPR, First Aid, water safety, and other youth safety presentations.
- **First Aid Team:** Volunteers help staff special events throughout the year. Advanced medical training is helpful but not required. Advanced Red Cross First Aid and CPR skills are necessary. Training is available.
- **Blood Donor Recruiter:** Volunteers work with individuals or groups to schedule blood drives.
- **Speakers:** Volunteers facilitate presentations within the community.
- **Maintenance:** Volunteers help with routine maintenance duties, such as stocking supplies and checking inventory at the shelter.

Will Volunteering Fit My Schedule?

The agency you volunteer with will work with you to provide rewarding experiences, whatever your schedule. You may choose to help with one-time events, like holiday functions, fund-raisers or mass training events. Some agencies will provide you with opportunities to work on short-term assignments, such as translating materials into another language or teaching a skill to others.

What Skills Should I Have?

In general, no special skills are required to volunteer. Emergency Volunteers come from different personal and professional backgrounds, with various skills and talents. Training will almost always be provided to you for free.

How do I Find an Agency where I can Volunteer?

Identifying an agency where you can volunteer will depend on many things, but most importantly, it should depend on your interests. Do you wish to volunteer in your own "backyard", in other regions of your country, or maybe even internationally? What type of emergency support are you able and willing to offer? How much time are you able to dedicate? Your decision will also depend on resources available around you.

A few agencies you could contact include:

- 1) Community Emergency Response Teams
- 2) Medical Reserve Corps
- 3) American Red Cross Volunteer Match

Community Emergency Response Team (CERT)

The CERT program teaches community members about disasters that can happen in their area. It teaches volunteers about disaster preparedness, and trains the volunteers in disaster response skills. This training prepares CERT members to help themselves, neighbors, and co-workers in the event of an emergency or disaster.

CERT members can help with emergency preparedness, and non-emergency projects that can improve the safety of their community. During emergencies like natural disasters and power outages, CERT members go to the affected area to estimate damages and help victims until first responders like the police, firemen, and ambulances arrive.

To learn more or contact your local CERT, visit: <http://www.citizencorps.gov/cert/>

Medical Reserve Corps (MRC)

MRC members include medical and public health professionals and community volunteers. MRC members receive training in emergency response actions like CPR, CERT training, basic first aid, and other medical treatment. Volunteers without medical training can also assist with administrative and support functions. These functions include training, volunteer coordination, translation, and radio operation. Like CERT volunteers, MRC members also help with non-emergency projects.

MRC provides a way to organize medical and non-medical volunteers to respond to natural disasters and emergencies. These volunteers are trained to help communities during emergencies. They also increase emergency preparedness and response efforts in communities.

To learn more, visit: <http://www.medicalreservecorps.gov/AboutVolunteering>

American Red Cross

The American Red Cross is one of several community organizations working together to respond to disasters. The Red Cross involves annually matching knowledge, skills, interests and experience of individuals with opportunities to serve their community.

Contact your local Red Cross for more information or go online to search thousands of one-time and ongoing Red Cross opportunities by zip code, category, and date.

To learn more, visit: <http://redcross.volunteermatch.org/> and <http://www.redcross.org/services/volunteer/>



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