

Litchfield Community Emergency Response Team (CERT)

The need for a local CERT became apparent after the major storms of 2011-2012 (Irene, Alfred, Sandy). Staff was needed to support commodities distribution, EOC and shelter operations for these events. Subsequent to these disasters, the Litchfield CERT was formed in 2013

In addition to basic CERT training, members of the Litchfield CERT have received training in shelter operations, damage assessment, amateur radio (licensing class), downed wires safety, and use of social media in disasters. The Litchfield CERT has members who speak French and Spanish as well as persons trained in post-traumatic psychological support.

As in many other towns, the Town of Litchfield has applied for and received 2 Citizen Corps equipment grants to purchase identification apparel (hats, golf shirts and sweatshirts) for team members.

The Litchfield CERT is under the direction of the Emergency Management Director. There are 23 members on the Litchfield CERT roster although the total number of members who have taken the Loyalty Oath may be something less than the total roster of 23 at any point in time. Members who have not taken the oath within the previous 12 month period (a legal requirement) are given the oath by the EMD immediately upon reporting for an emergency or non-emergency activation.

The Litchfield CERT may be used to staff shelters, assist with EOC operations, distribute commodities and to perform other essential tasks in an emergency.

Since its formation in 2013, the Litchfield CERT has been activated for a Point-of-Distribution exercise at the Torrington Middle School and the Governor's Annual Emergency Planning and Preparedness Initiative (EPPI) exercise. Litchfield CERT members have also supported the Litchfield Hills Road Race by manning crosswalks and assisting with crowd management.

Future Goals:

- Credentialing CERT members
- Commodities distribution training (food, water, ice, tarps)
- Web EOC training
- Point-of-distribution for public health emergencies
- Flagger training
- Wellness check training