



NJ Office of Emergency Management

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MOBILE COMMAND TRAILERS HIT THE ROAD ***NJOEM Kicks off National Preparedness Month with Deployment of Mobile Command Equipment, and a Preparedness Message for Residents***

(West Trenton, NJ) - Colonel Rick Fuentes, Director of the New Jersey Office of Emergency Management, today supplied Citizen Corps volunteers with specialized Mobile Command Trailers, including equipment to set up a mobile command post and triage center, to enhance their supporting role in New Jersey's homeland security.

"With more than 10,000 volunteers, New Jersey's Citizen Corps is the biggest in America. We know how important it is to have everyday citizens trained and ready to respond, to protect themselves and their communities during a crisis," Fuentes said.

Director Richard L. Cañas of the New Jersey Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness attended today's ceremony and said, "All of us should be prepared to expect the unexpected. I'm very proud of our Citizen Corps members who volunteer to help their fellow citizens during emergencies. We're very pleased today to provide them with additional tools, so they can better respond when disaster strikes."

Fuentes and Cañas also used the event as an opportunity to kick off National Preparedness Month. Throughout September, local Citizen Corps events will remind residents of the Three Steps to Safety: Get a Kit. Make a Plan. Stay Informed.

These basic preparedness tips help families negotiate all hazards, from terror alerts to natural disasters to chemical or radiological accidents. Easy-to-use information on the Three Steps to Safety can be found in English and Spanish at the NJOEM website, www.Ready.NJ.gov.

Fuentes presented nine Mobile Command Trailers to Citizen Corps teams strategically located across New Jersey. Each trailer is loaded with the equipment necessary to set up a mobile command post and triage center, including a command post tent, electric generator, emergency lights, stretchers, rescue devices and medical supplies.

Five of the trailers distributed today have additional equipment for specific missions: One is equipped for flood emergencies; three to set up mass-casualty triage areas; and one for crowd control and traffic control missions.

The specialized trailers are part of a pilot program. The program's success would influence the deployment of similar specialized trailers in New Jersey.

The following Citizen Corps groups received Mobile Command Trailers today:

- The CERT teams for Hopatcong, Little Egg Harbor Township, Manalapan, and Paterson each received one trailer.

- The Mercer County CERT team received the specialized trailer for flood emergencies.
- The NJ TRANSIT CERT team, and the Medical Reserve Corps teams in Atlantic and Bergen counties, each received a specialized trailer for high volume triage operations.
- The State Police Division Headquarters CERT team received the specialized trailer for crowd control and traffic control operations.

Today's deployment of Mobile Command Trailers is funded entirely by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. Each trailer is valued at \$3,100. The equipment in each trailer is valued at about \$4,500. In addition, the recipients of the four non-specialized trailers received \$1,200 to fit the trailer with shelves and other supplies.

With today's deployment, a total of 53 trailers have been deployed to Citizen Corps programs throughout New Jersey. The trailers are deployed in every county, and additional trailers will be deployed in NJOEM's continuing efforts to strengthen and enhance emergency response capabilities for New Jersey Citizen Corps volunteers.

New Jersey Citizen Corps is a volunteer organization directed by NJOEM. It includes the Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT), Medical Reserve Corps (MRC), Neighborhood Watch, Volunteers in Police Service and Fire Corps. New Jersey Citizen Corps and New Jersey CERT are the largest programs of their kind in the nation.

Commissioner Fred M. Jacobs of the New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services encouraged physicians, nurses EMTs, pharmacists and others to join their local MRC. "Local emergency preparedness is vital, and volunteers are vital to any emergency response effort," Jacobs said.

Citizen Corps volunteers are ordinary citizens who supplement and support their area's first responders. The volunteers undergo basic emergency management training including fire suppression, first aid and triage, search and rescue and disaster psychology.

During crises including the June 2006 flooding, New Jersey Citizen Corps volunteers have taken a leadership role in helping their neighbors; staffing emergency operations centers and evacuee shelters; directing the activities of other volunteers; and searching for missing children.

Citizen Corps volunteers must be at least 18 years old and have a valid drivers license. Anyone can participate, regardless of their level of physical ability. Those interested should call (609) 538-6064 and speak with Howard Butt, the New Jersey Citizen Corps Coordinator.

Further information can be found at www.Ready.NJ.gov.

Further information about National Preparedness Month can be found at the Federal website www.Ready.gov.

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