



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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April is National Volunteer Month! Get involved in CERT & ECS

San Bernardino -- The Board of Supervisors has proclaimed April as National Volunteer Month, in recognition of the dedication and service of the County's Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) and Emergency Communications Service (ECS) volunteers and encourages all residents of San Bernardino County to volunteer in their own community to better prepare themselves and their families.

The San Bernardino County Fire Department/Office of Emergency Services supports two volunteer programs, the CERT and ECS programs. These two programs are comprised of over 1,000 dedicated volunteers committed to preparing their communities and supporting local response agencies in the time of disaster. This commitment results annually in over 18,000 hours of preparation, training and volunteer service; and creates an important opportunity for residents of San Bernardino County to prepare their homes, businesses, and communities for any type of emergency including natural, manmade, and intentional disasters; ultimately increasing the preparedness of our community as a whole and increasing its resilience to all hazards.

The County CERT Program includes sixteen (16) unincorporated communities and currently has 877 CERT members. Examples of preparedness efforts and service include:

- Wrightwood CERT's activation to check on residents with disabilities during recent phone outages.
- Lake Arrowhead, Running Springs and Green Valley Lake exercised their "Red Card/Green Card" program during an exercise in Lake Arrowhead. Red Card/Green Card is a quick way for residents to visually notify the local CERT Members of their need for help in the event of a disaster.
- Silver Valley CERT provided CERT Basic Training to Silver Valley Unified School District key personnel to better prepare them to care for children in the time of Disaster.

The County ECS Program is made up of 221 dedicated and well trained amateur radio operators. Their commitment to service and an exemplary level of training are demonstrated by:

- Providing Emergency Communications for Wrightwood during recent phone outages.
- Supporting the Incident Command Post during the Hill Fire in Oak Hills this past September.
- Providing amateur radio training, technical support and inter-agency disaster communications coordination for twenty-six (26) County Departments.

The BOS recognizes the hard work, dedication and passion of volunteers throughout the County and praise their efforts in making San Bernardino County a better place to live, work and visit.

To learn how you can become a volunteer in your community, visit our website at www.sbcfire.org/oes. Courtesy photos are located on website under Latest News.

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