



Citizens Emergency Response and Preparedness Program

Local Residents Complete Advanced Emergency Response Training First Advanced Disaster Training Class Taught in Woodside Fire Protection District

Woodside, CA – October 18, 2012. Residents of the Woodside Fire Protection District, which includes Woodside, Portola Valley, and nearby unincorporated areas, are better prepared for disaster following the completion of a new advanced Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training program on October 7.

The program, sponsored by the Citizens Emergency and Response Preparedness Program (CERPP) and staffed by Woodside Fire fighters, is among the first of its kind to be taught in San Mateo County. The 24 participants, who represented a broad range of locations within the Fire District, had all completed basic CERT training previously.

The new program focused on reacting to a highly realistic disaster scenario of the aftermath of an earthquake, which included a simulated gas line explosion and fire. More than 15 additional people, including Fire Department Cadets, were involved in the exercise as bystanders, helpers, and disaster victims--complete with makeup and realistic injuries.

“Participants in this training are now in a much better position to lead their neighborhoods in case of an actual emergency,” said John Carnes, CERPP Division Leader for Skyline and a member of the CERPP Board of Directors, who headed the Incident Command Post for the training day. “Being through this kind of drill makes these volunteers much more effective in a real emergency situation.”

Carnes noted that each individual received a set of exercises that they can use to prep residents of their own neighborhoods. In addition, CERT trained volunteers all have received decals to place on their vehicles, identifying them in case of an emergency.

Prevention and Preparedness is Key

In case of a disaster, such as a major earthquake or wildland fire, it’s likely that regular emergency systems, such as 911, will be overwhelmed. That’s why it’s important that local residents are trained to know how to respond to various facets of an emergency situation, including isolating hazardous situations and handling severe injuries.

CERPP has been working with the Fire District for the last 12 years to promote emergency readiness and safety preparations in Woodside, Portola Valley and surrounding unincorporated areas.

CERPP is looking for additional volunteers to assist in local neighborhoods, as well as to staff communication, publicity, and logistics teams. Interested individuals should contact CERPP at info@cerpp.org, or go to the CERPP website, www.bereadytoday.org.

The ongoing CERT program is a key focus for CERPP, and is supported by the Fire District as well as the Towns of Woodside and Portola Valley. Other programs include the recent High Fire Danger campaign launched throughout the District with banners and yard signage to alert residents when weather conditions indicate extra care is required to prevent wildland fire, and the ongoing Wood Chipper program.

More tips on emergency preparedness are available at CERPP's website, www.bereadytoday.org.

About CERPP

CERPP is the Citizens Emergency and Response Preparedness Program serving the Woodside Fire Protection District, including the Towns of Portola Valley and Woodside and adjacent unincorporated areas.

CERPP's primary goal is to promote emergency preparedness and response capability at the citizen and neighborhood level in the event of a disaster that overwhelms traditional emergency response resources. CERPP offers classes in emergency response training on an ongoing basis at no charge to local residents. Information about CERPP and disaster preparedness is available at www.bereadytoday.org.

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