

March 22, 2023

As a recent newcomer to High River and being a member of Search and Rescue I became aware of the CERT (Community Emergency Response Team) training program being offered here. I talked to the program leaders to understand what all this entailed and immediately signed up for the next training session. The thought of an emergency response program that taught the residences of a community the basics for preparedness in case of an emergency situation was very encouraging. Teaching people the skills necessary to look after themselves, their families, neighbours and support emergency personnel, to me was such a beneficial opportunity.

Upon completion of the training I was very impressed with the professional, knowledgeable individuals that were presenting the training material. I came away with gaining some great experience that I know will be beneficial to me if an emergency situation arises. The program was run very methodically, staying on topic with good time management. The program leaders were secular and unbiased which made for a very comfortable setting.

CERT is meant to be utilized in a community with a group of like-minded trained individuals that come together to provide scene emergency management at a time of calamity. They are neighborhood focused and are there to respond immediately when a disaster happens ahead of Emergency Responders. The example I can think of is if you come across a car accident on the highway and you are the first one there. You would immediately follow a protocol to help the people involved in the accident until the Emergency Responders arrived. This could be a number of things such as safely securing the area, managing traffic, applying first aid assessments and comforting the individuals. Once responders arrived you would pass on any info you have for them to take over. CERT personnel in a specific neighborhood would apply the same principles working as a team to safely assess and perform basic emergency measures to save as many lives as possible.

Complacency is a very dangerous attitude that takes the preparedness and response away from individuals, there is any number of situations where complacency has led to major incidents and loss of life. **Being prepared is not paranoia it is about survival.**

Bob Jackson  
High River Resident