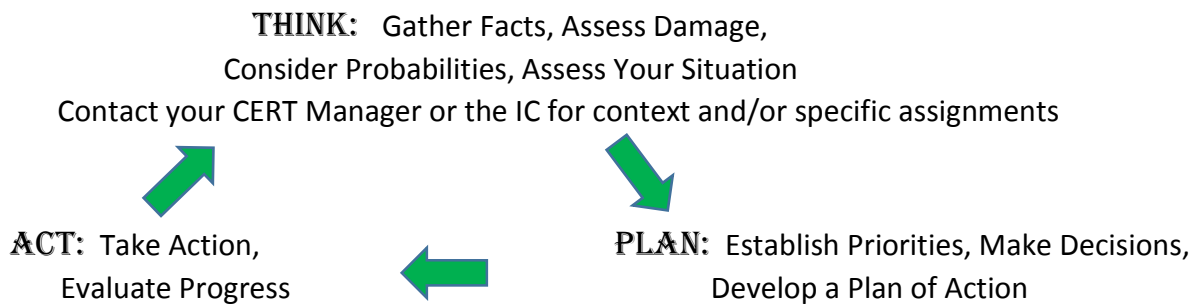




## CERT Posts and Field Teams: Set-Up, Equipment, Operation, Coordination

### Size-Up

Think about the situation (local problems) and the possible uses of CERT personnel and resources. Size up the building, the situation, the capabilities of available volunteers, etc.....and weigh that information against CERT's general parameters. TALK to your CERT Manager or the Incident Commander about where you and your team might be needed for more critical jobs.



### “Self-Activation” → Head to the Fire Stations

In a major earthquake or other disaster in which it is obvious that CERT is needed, secure your household first, then report to the nearest fire station. Even if it is damaged beyond usability, establish a make-shift CERT Post (CP) outside or from your car. Check with the CERT Manager for instructions.

### CP Set-Up

#### First person to arrive:

1. Wait for buddy to enter a building; if needed, get VIFR building access code from CERT Manager, EOC or VIFR personnel
2. Open up Activation/Admin box and start sign-in of volunteers and a CP log sheet.
3. Report to CERT Manager that you are activating (if you can't reach CERT Manager, contact the EOC)
4. Get instructions on what is needed from CERT at your location or in teams you may be able to dispatch as other volunteers become available.
5. Set up a reception area at which you can talk to public and sign-in volunteers. Two main volunteers at the CP wear the red vests. Others will likely get dispatched.
6. Take down information from the public and CERT volunteers about damage/injuries/problems and report it to the EOC promptly
7. Hand off CP leader position to more experienced person if you need to

**At fire stations,** only open the truck bay doors if needed; open them fully, never partially

Refer to the fire station map (in the CERT forms/admin binder) that indicates parking, where to dig an outdoor latrine if needed, the septic drain field location, etc.

Note: the bay doors at the 4 out-based VIFR stations all operate differently; on-site training required

**Ham radio operators** (licensed only; CERT members or not) can set up and use the LACC – Local Area Communications Cache to communicate via Ham radio

**Vests and CERT ID:** CP leader and second-in-charge should wear red vest. Wear hi-vis CERT vests if the red ones are unavailable. Put a name tag in the plastic holder on the vest. All CERT volunteers **MUST** have some type of clothing, name tag or vest that visibly identifies them (no exceptions).

## Record Keeping

**CERT Post Log:** assign a scribe if possible; someone needs to document the important activity and events at your CP

**Radio Log:** radio operator should scribe their own communications

**Sign in sheets:** REW's include their REW card number

Only "deputize" TEW's if you need them for a job you can't accomplish otherwise.

Do not sign up TEW's just because they show up; not allowed per state law.

Even if you are using blank paper, names and info must be legible

**Message Forms (ICS-213)** – Write succinct messages on a form for radio people to transmit for you

**Damage Assessment (DA) forms (aka, Windshield Surveys):** Use DA forms for more complicated reports; ICS-213 can be used for simple reports and will be more expeditious in getting the info reported to the EOC.

**Medical and Logistics Forms** are in the admin binders – use as needed

## First Aid Station

Your CP can easily be set up to render first aid. This is one of the mostly likely things CERT will be needed for. Upon arrival, get out the first aid "tackle box" and tub(s) of supplies to refresh your memory on available supplies. Check how many blankets, tarps, etc. are available (most will be in large rolling can). Designate a first aid manager if you have enough qualified volunteers; this person needs to assure that records are kept on patient treatment, that patients are given care and/or transport they need for better care. Also check-in with CERT manager to see if good first-aiders are needed to support MRC.

## OPLA Roles: Operations, Planning, Logistics & Administration

We aim to prevent "top-heaviness" at CERT CP's, but it is important to understand the OPLA structure so we can talk the same language as our EOC and all operations units. While the CP may have all OPLA functions at some level, we are highly unlikely in a major regional disaster to have enough qualified volunteers to designate one person per function, even at CERT's main CP. Further, the scope of CERT's work at is likely to be narrow enough that one leader with a couple of competent CERT team members will need to (and can) handle all the roles simultaneously.

## Dispatching or Assigning Field Teams – Designate an OPERATIONS person (or do it yourself)

The CP leader will find it helpful to designate one person to track the assignments and dispatch of all teams if there are more than a couple of teams being sent out. This can get complicated if a lot of volunteers respond to the activation. In searches for lost individuals, the CP leader (usually the CERT Manager) absolutely will designate one person as the Ops Lead to coordinate getting the teams sent off on their assignments, tracking them and checking them in again. Any CERT team on foot, horseback or

wheels is part of the CERT “command” structure and does not set up their own chain of command or communication to the EOC.

### **Think Ahead About Your Needs and Future Actions – Be a **PLANNER****

As you run low on supplies, and if you can anticipate how the situation will unfold and what will present itself to your CERT team or CP, discuss this with the CERT Manager who will help you communicate your needs upward or onward to the appropriate people or sources. Involve your whole team in thinking about future needs and what direction your activities will take you. Communicating your future needs to the CERT Manager or IC is critical.

### **Tracking Gear (incoming and outgoing) – Designate a **LOGISTICS** person (or do it yourself)**

If you have the luxury of enough volunteers, have one person keep track of all gear and supplies that teams take out, plus request additional resources. Since “stuff” is easier than volunteer hours to get paid for in a disaster situation, keep close track of the things that are used up, damaged, etc.

### **Everyone Must Use the Paperwork and Forms – Be conscientious **ADMINISTRATORS****

Administration is not one person’s job. It is the job of almost everyone working on a CERT team or at a CP to document their actions, communications and/or needs. The CP leader or the designated Administration person should check with everyone periodically to see that required documentation is being done and that forms are collected at the end of the shift or activation.

Only if you have the luxury of a “spare” qualified volunteer to fill out log sheets, forms, etc. and keep them organized should you designate someone for this. It is highly unlikely you will have this luxury.

### **Passing the Baton or Changing Shifts – one person or the whole team**

#### **DUTIES OF THE OUTGOING TEAM:**

1. Finish documenting significant actions and events; organize that paperwork so it is useable by future teams or by finance personnel who need to make claims for disaster response expenses or to prove what did or did not happen at your Post
2. “Give report” - Give a succinct but thorough oral report that matches the CP log and other documents. Answer questions and be sure the next team understands your status.
3. Clean up any messes and tidy up supplies and paperwork for the next team of volunteers.
4. Leave any CERT or official supplies at the CP; check your car and backpack, as well as the vicinity of the CP for whose stuff is whose. In an activation it is easy to co-mingle your own stuff with company gear.

### **Demobilizing a CERT CP**

The Incident Commander and CERT Manager will decide when CERT volunteers are not needed at the CP or are needed for other assignments. Regardless of the reason for demobilizing your CP, follow these procedures:

1. Account for all the volunteers; if they sign-out remotely, collect those forms.
2. Separate dirty/damaged equipment that needs to be cleaned; leave it in a pile at the fire station if you can’t clean/dry it thoroughly unless given other instructions by CERT Manager (or Logistics Lead)
3. Pack unused supplies back into crates or big CERT trash can if they are clean and dry. Stack everything neatly; spread out wet stuff or take it to location you are instructed about

4. Give CERT Manager (or Logistics Lead) a rough status report on the equipment at your CP. Also compile a rough inventory (written) and turn it in
5. Carefully put away Ham radio cache (LACC) and lock the cabinet
6. Shut down portable generator(s). Let them cool before putting them away. Store all gas cans in fuel locker, even if they are empty
7. Clean up the entire fire station as best you can; make sure nothing blocks any VIFR equipment
8. Find out whether to leave used paperwork/forms in the folder provided in our kit or whether to turn it in to the CERT Manager, EOC or other person
9. Have all volunteers sign out; make a final entry in CP log about demobilizing
10. Notify the CERT Manager or EOC when you are ready to leave the station.

### Garbage and Sanitation: a public health issue

In a disaster that impairs solid waste collection, garbage WILL be a big problem early-on. As we conduct response and recovery efforts, we need to **triage the trash** and find storage places that protect it as needed...some trash needs way more protection than other.

1. Junk that is not hazardous/contaminated and that will not attract critters if left outside unsealed
2. Ordinary household-type waste including used medical treatment materials that contain just small amounts of body fluids. Store it in leak-proof bags and protect it from critters.
3. Items soaked with body fluids (not just a little fluid) should go in designated sealed bags (red ones are preferable, but may be in short supply)
4. Needles and other “sharps” should go in a designated container. The VIFR aid cars have them, and some public restrooms have them. Use a make-shift container if you need one.
5. Human waste should not have to be handled, moved, manually treated or cleaned up by CERT or anyone else if humanly possible. If toilets are not working, human waste belongs in the ground. Dig group latrines or use cat-holes in areas that are not used for other purposes. ONLY use the plastic pail and chemicals in the CERT cache as a truly last resort.  
If toilets ARE working, sanitize restrooms frequently and remind everyone about good hygiene.
6. Separate clean recyclables from the garbage if you have time, but do it correctly the first time.

### Memorize and/or store in your phone, notebook, car, hard hat, go-kit...

VIFR main office phone number: 206-463-2405

Ham radio repeater: W7VMI (call sign used to reach the EOC)

VIFR station numbers: 55 Main 56 Burton 57 Tahlequah 58 Dockton 59 North

CERT Managers’ names and contact info:

Jan Milligan home: 206-463-2718 cell: 206-949-1184

Corinne Harmon cell: 206-351-6705

Jim Lilje home: 206-463-6604 cell: 206-310-0631

### Mental Health: Stay Focused, Grounded, Calm and Pleasant

There is NO room in CERT for panic, worry or grumpiness. Worry is nothing more than unproductive reiteration of a problem. We are smart and resourceful problem-solvers, our island is reasonably well prepared for disasters, and we will use a big dose of great teamwork and thorough communication that will enable us to shine in our service and results.