

## **Vashon Maury NERO - Neighborhood Emergency Response Organizations Best Practices for NERO captains**

### **Basic ideas for organizing a lasting and effective NERO:**

- Follow natural geographies: line of sight, groupings of homes, single streets
- Include five to fifteen households
- Start with neighbors who already know each other, then build
- Stay flexible - some neighbors will opt out or phase out, others will join
- Combine with other social organizations (Block Watch, social groups, churches, sports)
- Meet at least once per year; add social elements (food, fun); keep focused and brief.
- Communicate at least quarterly (using email, phone trees, social media: twitter, Facebook, Nextdoor)
- Know your nearest fire station and area coordinator/s
- Practice neighborhood assessment and reporting up
- Follow NERO news at [VashonBePrepared.org](http://VashonBePrepared.org), Vashon Maury NERO on Facebook

### **Advanced ideas for organizing a NERO with greater resilience:**

- Identify co-captains, who will attend captains' meetings and get further training
- Include children and youth in preparations, drills and training sessions
- Plan for animals (especially lost or unattended pets and livestock)
- Understand community-wide emergency response, and your NERO's role in it
- Assess existing skills and resources, including leadership and organizational skills
- Identify extraordinary needs (elderly and/or frail, people with disabilities, young children, part-timers, commuters, those households with electric heat only)
- Identify challenges specific to your neighborhood
- Practice assessment and reporting up during power-outage days and other minor events
- Invite experts to quarterly meetings
- Discover and use local incentives (kit-building days, coupons at local stores, talks on special topics, food and fun)
- Cross-train within your NERO on neighborhood assessment, first aid, ham radio and other useful skills
- Create tools and plans specific to your NERO (e.g. maps, house tags, ok/help window signs, runners, caches)
- Form committees to solve specific challenges (e.g. communications, roads, first aid)
- Identify mustering point/s and safe shelters
- Help each other with household preparedness (e.g. buying groups, teaming up on checklists)
- Participate in island-wide drills
- Contribute to island-wide NERO news
- Encourage greater participation in CERT, ARES, Red Cross, EOC, ACS, etc.