

Costa Mesa CERT Creates a Rumble

According to recent FEMA research, nearly 70 percent of Americans have not participated in a preparedness drill or exercise, aside from a fire drill, at their workplace, school or home in the past two years. Practicing through drills or exercises for an emergency is a great way to get prepared for the hazards you may face.

The Costa Mesa, CA CERT program understands the importance of practice and made strides to get their community prepared through an earthquake exercise last November. The exercise consisted of organizing an activation and deployment of 55 trained CERT volunteers to Brentwood Park, located in a local neighborhood, to team up with participating local residents.

The two groups formed four 10-person combined teams that united CERT skills and training with knowledge of the local neighborhood. The teams performed damage assessment and search and rescue, provided medical treatment to survivors, and set up a secure pet rehab area and a reunification area.

26 households participated in the 5.5 hour Brentwood Neighborhood Exercise. The exercise was very well received by the local community, which has requested additional similar exercises in the future.

Costa Mesa CERT's exercise is an excellent example of the types of activities CERT programs, Citizen Corps Councils, and other local organizations can plan and organize to get community members involved in preparedness by practicing for a relevant hazard. If you are interested in having a similar exercise in your community, we encourage you to check out the resources available at www.ready.gov/prepare, including playbooks for local leaders for planning and organizing events, and free customizable communications tools and resources. Just select a hazard that may impact your community to get started. Once you plan your event, we hope you'll share it with other communities throughout the country by registering for [America's PrepareAthon!](#) and visiting the [America's PrepareAthon! "Add Events" page](#).

America's PrepareAthon! is a national action campaign to increase community preparedness and resilience through hazard-specific drills, group discussions and exercises.