
UNIT 4: CERT BASIC TRAINING

UNIT 2 REVIEW

In this unit you will review the following information about *CERT Basic Training* Unit 2:

- **Unit Purpose**
- **Unit Objectives**
- **Key Points to Be Made in the Unit**
- **Training Videos Relevant to the Unit**
- **The Hands-on Activities in the Unit and How to Conduct Them Correctly**
- **How This Unit Connects to the Other Units**

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T-T-T UNIT OVERVIEW

This unit reviews the content and activities in *CERT Basic Training* Unit 2. It also looks at how Unit 2 connects to the other units in the *CERT Basic Training* course.

UNIT 2 PURPOSE

The purpose of *CERT Basic Training* Unit 2 is to:

- Teach about fire hazards and personal fire safety
- Introduce the concept of sizeup
- Reinforce the concept of teamwork

UNIT 2 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The learning objectives for Unit 2 are:

1. To explain the role of CERTs in fire safety
2. To identify and reduce potential fire and utility risks in the home and workplace
3. To know the nine steps of the CERT sizeup process
4. To conduct a basic sizeup for a fire emergency
5. To operate a portable fire extinguisher correctly
6. To understand minimum safety precautions, including safety equipment, utility control, buddy system, and backup teams
7. To identify the locations of hazardous materials in the community and home and reduce the risk from hazardous materials in the home

This unit is full of important information – information upon which the rest of the *Basic Training* is founded (buddy system, sizeup, limitations of CERTs, etc.).

UNIT 2 KEY TOPICS

In this unit, the instructor needs to do the following:

- Give a brief overview of the unit and the material that will be covered
- Give basic info about fire and fire hazards
 - In the home and workplace
 - Hazardous materials
- Teach people what they can do to reduce the hazards in the home and workplace
- Teach people what fires and hazardous materials they can and can't respond to and how to do it safely

- Highlight the:
 - Role of CERT members
 - Importance of the buddy system
 - Importance of personal protective equipment (PPE)
- Continue modeling:
 - PPE demonstration
 - Personal and family safety comes first
 - Team building
 - Emphasize the motto: Do the greatest good for the greatest number in the shortest amount of time.
 - “What if” scenarios: What would you do if the ground started shaking, if the fire alarm went off, etc.?

TRAINING VIDEOS FOR UNIT 2

If time permits, the 18-minute video *Fire Safety: The CERT Member’s Role* is recommended for this unit. The video provides information on how to size up the fire and select the right extinguisher, as well as how to use extinguishers correctly.

The video is available for download at the National CERT Web site
<http://www.fema.gov/cert>.

HANDS-ON ACTIVITIES IN UNIT 2

Suppressing Small Fires (*Basic Training* IG p. 2-52)

Purpose

To provide hands-on practice in two key areas of fire suppression:

1. Using a portable fire extinguisher to suppress a small fire (as identified by the 5-second standard). If a CERT member cannot suppress the fire within 5 seconds after beginning to apply the product, he or she should back away.
2. Applying teamwork to fire suppression. It is essential that people understand that they are not only preventing damage due to small fires but they are also making the area safe for themselves and others.

Latitude to Adapt

Even if you don’t use the full burn pan setup, walk participants through the steps to extinguish a fire.

How to Do the Activity Correctly

1. Ensure that all of the participants are dressed properly and wear safety equipment.
2. Be sure to work with fire department for assistance in building and operating a fire pan.
3. Check with your State fire marshal about guidelines for open burning.
4. Make sure that you have enough fire extinguishers for the participants. Many fire extinguisher service companies will provide Class ABC portable extinguishers for the final activity in this unit. Contact local companies for support.
5. This exercise requires two instructors: Instructor 1 will lead the exercise. Instructor 2 will observe and serve as the exercise Safety Officer.
6. Follow the exercise instructions completely.
7. Be prepared for the questions that typically arise after this exercise. For example, one question that might arise is “What happens when the fire is extinguished after 5 seconds?” The response would be “Back out with your buddy.” Another question that might arise is “What happens if my extinguisher runs out?” The response is “Your buddy has an extinguisher.”

TIPS FOR TEACHING UNIT 2

- Be prepared to answer the “what if” questions.
- Emphasize the role of CERT members. Make the distinction that *CERT Basic Training* does not teach people how to become firefighters.
- Highlight the importance of the buddy system. Demonstrate how to work together as a team.

Emphasize the importance of PPE. Tell participants to follow PPE guidelines as specified by the local jurisdiction. When demonstrating activities in this unit (and others), instructors must wear PPE as part of the actual in-house demonstration.

- Know when and why you turn off utilities.
- Learn about the rural and urban differences in the types of utilities. Make sure that instructors are familiar with what the local utilities are and how to respond to them. For example, natural gas and propane react differently, and it is important for CERT members to know procedures for each.

TIPS FOR TEACHING UNIT 2 (CONTINUED)

- Make sure that you have all types of fire extinguishers.
 - Consider asking participants to bring extinguishers from home.
 - Place the extinguishers up front at the beginning of the session. Fire extinguishers are inherently interesting and will focus trainees on fire attack/fire suppression.

If CO₂ extinguishers are used for demonstration in the classroom, be sure to open the classroom doors for ventilation.

- Take the time to demonstrate each step of approaching the fire, discharging the extinguisher, and backing out. Use another instructor or a participant as your buddy during the demonstration.
- Explain each step as you demonstrate it, including details such as body position of lead person and buddy, handling the extinguisher, etc.
- Emphasize how quickly fire spreads. Most people don't realize how quickly a fire that is initially manageable can become unmanageable.

Encourage people to think creatively about possible fire suppression resources.

- Emphasize how everyday products can be hazardous, e.g., dairy creamer. Suggestion: Open up the training space. Light a match and trickle some dairy creamer onto it. The creamer will ignite. Use this demonstration to walk trainees through thinking about places in the community that may be loaded with flammables after a disaster event (e.g., dry cleaners, paint store).
- Don't get too in depth with material about placards. Emphasize that they are a "stop sign."
- This unit requires a number of demonstrations. Prepare a breaker box, a fuse box, and, if possible, a gas meter prop. Your local utilities may be able to donate these props or make them available for CERT training. The goal is to demystify these utility devices and have trainees acquire a basic understanding of how these devices work.

Consider taking the cotton ball exercise outside. Note: This exercise is found on page 2-12 of the Instructor Guide.

HOW UNIT 2 CONNECTS TO OTHER *CERT BASIC TRAINING* UNITS

This unit introduces the concept of sizeup. That concept is used throughout the course. You want your participants to have sizeup “on the brain” at the end of this unit.

This unit reinforces the concepts of:

- Teamwork
- The buddy system
- PPE
- Personal safety
- Limitations

T-T-T UNIT SUMMARY

This unit has provided information on *CERT Basic Training* Unit 2.

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