



Incorporating Community Emergency Response Teams with Disaster Management Interoperability Services



- **New requirements placed on First Responders since 911 have significantly impacted staff resources.**
- **These demands have brought about the rebirth of volunteer concepts, that were in use during the 1940's and 50's to meet the increased demands.**
- **One of these volunteer concepts previously known as Civil Defense has been revived in the form of Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT). These teams are well trained and with proper coordination can be a valuable Community resource during emergencies and special events.**



- In 2003 the City of Laurel graduated the first CERT class in Prince George's County, MD.
- The class was trained using the core curriculum as defined by the Federal Emergency Management Agency. The City of Laurel added a course to assist staff in our Emergency Operations Center (EOC) using Disaster Management Interoperability - Services (DMI-S) applications.
- This opportunity gives CERT members a chance to learn how First Responding Agencies work together to resolve situations as well as providing our professional staff time off to rest during long term events or take on other assignments.



- **The City incorporated a CERT Coordinator at the EOC to deploy CERT members.**
- **This addressed one of the major concerns regarding CERT brought to our attention by Police, Fire and EMS agencies.**
- **All City of Laurel, MD CERT members are taught that they do not deploy to emergency areas unless directed to do so.**



- **The only exception to the deployment requirements being unless they come upon an emergency before First Responders have arrived or their immediate community is directly impacted by the emergency.**
- **They are taught that if this is the case they are to help the public and/or their neighbors, assess damage and report their findings to the Emergency Operations Center or to First Responders upon arrival.**
- **The City of Laurel provides some incentives to attract and retain our CERT members.**



- **The first and foremost to keep the members interested they are involved with frequent drills involving First Responders.**
- **The second incentive is a limited Worker's Compensation Plan.**
- **CERT volunteers are a great resource for all types of disciplines during an event of emergency situation.**
- **The CERT volunteers trained to use DMI-S applications help our EOC staff to assess situations faster which allows us to provide the right resources at the right place in a timely manner.**