CERT Training Courses
Scheduled

Lancaster location:
Border Community SERVICE will host a CERT course on Thursday evenings (6:30 to 9:30 PM) beginning January 13th at the Lancaster Office of Emergency Management at 321 Columbia Avenue in Depew, NY. The course will run eight consecutive weeks with a disaster simulation scheduled for Saturday, March 5th. Participants must be at least 16 years of age and plan to attend all sessions.

All interested community members should visit www.niagara.edu/bcs-enrollment to enroll in this training or call Dana Estrada at 286-8304 for more information.

Newfane location:
A free CERT training course is being offered at the Newfane Community Center, 2737 Main Street in Newfane beginning on January 11, 2011.
The classes will run eight consecutive Tuesday evenings from 6:00 to 9:00 pm and culminate in a disaster simulation on Saturday, March 5th from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm. CERT training prepares you to help yourself, family, and neighbors in the event of a catastrophic disaster. Participants must be at least 16 years of age and plan to attend all sessions.

For more information or to enroll in the training, please contact Valerie Haseley, Niagara County Project Coordinator at (716) 286-8023. To register online, please visit www.niagara.edu/bcs-enrollment.

Volunteers Needed for Niagara County Department of Health POD
The Niagara County Department of Health is looking for volunteers to assist with their upcoming Point of Dispensing (POD) for the Flu Vaccine taking place on Friday, December 10 at Gratwick Fire Department, 110 Ward Road in North Tonawanda. Volunteers are needed between 8:30 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. and will be provided with training, food and beverages.

If you are interested, please contact Jayne Ferguson with the Department of Health at 439-7439 or jayne.ferguson@niagaracounty.com.
November has proved to be a busy month as well. I’ve continued doing presentations at the Office of Aging sites, reaching 200 individuals at nine sites throughout the County. The folks I’ve been meeting have been wonderful and interested in the topic of Emergency Preparedness.

I attended the Independent Health “Good for the Neighborhood” Fair on November 18th at the Doris W. Jones Center in Niagara Falls, and spoke with approximately 40 families about emergency preparedness and gave out survival wraps and Ready Rex activity books. I also conducted a Skills Enhancement class November 17th on AAA Winter Safe Driving. Cambria Volunteer Fire Company graciously hosted the course with 20 people in attendance. This newsletter includes some helpful tips and a check-list for useful items to keep in your car for your information.

Most importantly, I’ve secured a CERT class in Newfane starting January 11th, 2011. We are excited to be holding a class in Eastern Niagara County. I am looking forward to conducting this class and working with the local fire hall and presenters. Please let anyone you know who may be interested in taking this class.

Please contact Valerie Haseley at (716) 286-8023 or vhaseley@niagara.edu if you need more information or would like to have a presentation scheduled with your group. Happy Holidays!

Volunteers Needed for World Junior Hockey Games December 26 - January 5

A portion of the games for The World Junior Hockey Games are taking place at Dwyer Arena at Niagara University. Volunteers are needed to assist during this time - taking place December 26 to January 5. Please contact me at 716.286.8023 or vhaseley@niagara.edu if you are interested. A representative from NU Campus Safety will contact you to further discuss volunteer opportunities and your availability.

Emergency Preparedness Workshop for WNY Scouts

This event includes education and information to complete the requirements of the Boy Scout Emergency Preparedness Merit Badge and the Girl Scout Emergency Preparedness Patch, excluding the practical exercise (disaster drill). Scouts and leaders should be in uniform.

This event is open to all Western New York Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts.

- Saturday, January 8, 2011
- 8:30 am. Registration
- 9:00 am to 4:00 pm Workshop
- Lunch is provided
- Niagara University Campus
- Cost is free!

Provided by Border Community SERVICE of Niagara University

Limited space is available so register on-line early at www.niagara.edu/border-community-service or call 716.286.8023
On November 18th the “Ready America” community preparedness presentation was delivered at St. John Tower to a packed house! This group had also been given information on preventing identity theft and welcomed additional knowledge on how to stay safe in modern society. The event was arranged through the Senior Companion Services and I would like to extend a big thanks to Lisa Holmes for hosting the session. We also had members of the Network of Religious Communities of Buffalo join the group to watch the presentation so that a future partnership could be extended with that organization.

An informational booth was set up at the Thanksgiving Dinner at Schiller Park Senior Center. This free evening attracted over 220 members of the South Buffalo community including the after-school program from the nearby elementary school. This event fostered key contacts in the communities and many discussions on emergency preparedness. Thank you to Ms. Triggs for welcoming Border Community SERVICE to join this evening of thanks, sharing, and gratitude.

Continuing the spirit of Thanksgiving, Border Community SERVICE was represented at the Holiday dinner at Vive La Casa. Vive Inc. is the largest refugee shelter in the United States. With a little help from interpreters, information regarding preparing for emergencies was given to the residents of Vive La Casa. The refugees were extremely appreciative for the materials distributed and the opportunity to learn about this topic. Thank you to Ursula Davis for welcoming us to the residence.

A partnership has been forged with the Block Clubs and Neighborhood Associations of Buffalo. We will be working with the selected Promise Neighborhoods of Buffalo to promote the, “Map Your Neighborhood” Program throughout next year. Promise Neighborhoods is an initiative under the Fund for the Improvement of Education Program under the Department of Education. This program is inspired by the Harlem Children’s Zone, and is a bid to break the vicious cycle of inner-city intergenerational poverty.

In December, I will be presenting the “Ready America” presentation at a Parents’ Night in a nearby buffalo public school, the FLARE Center, and I will be working with the Girls Group under the City of Buffalo Youth Counseling Center.

Many thanks to the team at Sam Hoyt’s office for their donation of batteries that we be distributed during the presentations in an effort to remind residents to change out the ones in their smoke detectors. The Holiday season is a great reminder to keep your loved ones safe. Have you changed the batteries in your smoke and carbon monoxide detectors in the last six months?

Wishing everyone a peaceful and joyous holiday season.

The next CERT Skills Enhancement Training will be hosted at Medaille College on December 14th, 2010 from 6:00 pm to 7:30 pm in the main building, room M-102. Presenting this month will be members of the Niagara Search and Rescue Team who will talk about what they do as a team and their duties. They will also speak of the Ten Essentials of “Wilderness Travel” – something we all encounter when we step off ‘the pavement’. Pre-registration is required; if interested in attending please contact Elizabeth Oddy, City of Buffalo Project Coordinator, at (716) 851-4299 or ehoddy@bpdny.org. I hope you can join us for the final training of 2010.
The CERT Training Course was a great success! Many thanks to Bob Lutz and all the instructors who helped train the new CERT members. The Grand Island Moulage team deserves an enormous thank you for all of their help dressing up the volunteers as victims. Thank you to all of the volunteers who assisted with the final CERT Training Course disaster exercise including: John Kasupski, Michelle Fittry, Jillian Fittry, Peggy Kleiber, Heidi Kleiber, Dominik Villarreal, PJ Doce, Bill Fleck, Marge Fleck, Regina Lyons, Dick Blakowski, Dick Nelson, Mary Metzler, Matthew Spina, Autumn Spina, Emily Spina, Sarah Metzler, Katherine Metzler, Dominik Villarreal, Bob Durfey, Len Broncato, Christopher Lutz, and Jarrod Clark. Special thanks to photographers Peter Darrigo and Mike Seibel for taking pictures.

Reminder:
CERT Board Nominations are being accepted for the Chairperson and Secretary positions. Anyone wishing to make a nomination for the new Chairperson and Secretary should contact Peter Darrigo or Marge Fleck during the months of December and January. Nominations will not be accepted after January 24, 2010.

Enjoy the Holiday Season!

Holiday Volunteers Needed

St. Amelia’s parish is having a Holiday Gifting for the Needy on December 14, 2010. Anyone who wishes to help should arrive between the hours of 11am-7pm.
AAA-Safe Winter Driving

Preparation Checklist:
Before winter arrives, prepare your vehicle for use on ice and snow.
Avoid driving while fatigued.
Use your safety belt every time you get in the vehicle.
Never warm up a vehicle in an enclosed area, such as a garage.
Never leave your vehicle unattended with the engine running.
Make certain your tires are properly inflated.
Keep your gas tank at least half full to avoid gas line freeze-up.
If possible, avoid using your parking brake in cold, rainy and snowy weather.
Do not use cruise control when driving on any slippery surface (wet, ice, sand, etc.).
Always look and steer where you want to go.

Driving in ice and snow conditions can be very challenging. The key to safe driving is to adapt to these conditions. Follow these tips to arrive at your destination safely.

Useful Items to Keep in Your Vehicle

- Charged cell phone
- Flashlight with extra batteries
- First-aid kit (including vinyl or Latex gloves)
- Three (3) reflective warning triangles, collapsible cones or warning flares
- Reflective vest
- Jack, lug wrench, flat board (to be placed under jack on soft road shoulders), and a wheel clock
- Jumper cables
- Small tools - flat and Phillips head Screwdrivers, pliers and wrench
- Pencil and notebook
- Empty gas can
- Paper towels, glass cleaner
- Fire extinguisher
- Rain poncho
- Window punch/Life Hammer tool (keep in glove compartment)
- Bottles water/non-perishable food items
- Disposable camera (if your cell phone does not have photo capabilities)
- Extra medication for emergencies

Especially for Winter

- Ice scraper/snow brush
- Small shovel
- Small bag of abrasive material - sand, salt, non-clumping kitty litter
- Blanket
- Gloves
- Windshield de-icer
- Lock de-icer (keep this out of the car - It won’t do you any good if you can’t get it!)

Keep these items Handy to Maintain Your Vehicle

- Tire pressure gauge
- Air compressor
- Windshield-washer fluid
- Gallon of antifreeze
- Quart of oil
Holiday Safety: An Ounce of Prevention

The biggest impact we can have in emergency preparedness is becoming oriented toward prevention. The old truisms go, “An ounce of prevention IS worth a pound of cure”. As we plan our celebrations this season, please take a moment to review some health and safety that may help you to avoid being a “Holiday Horror Story”.

**Electrical overloads:** Do Not Overload Electrical Outlets. According to the U.S. Fire Administration, you should not link more than three light strands, unless the directions indicate it is safe. Connect strings of lights to an extension cord before plugging the cord into the outlet. Make sure to periodically check the wires – they should not be warm to the touch and holiday lights should never be left unattended.

**Trip and fall hazards:** According to Lynne Beattie of the National Council on Aging, an “older American” is sent to the hospital every 18 second due to the effects of a fall. The causes of these falls are not complex: slipping on a loose rug, tripping over a cat and getting dizzy when standing up are some of the more common causes listed. In addition to removing household hazards, moderate exercise and regular eye exams can help reduce this $19 billion dollar per year epidemic.

**Christmas tree safety:** The U.S. Fire Administration reports that Christmas trees account for 200 fires annually, resulting in 6 deaths, 25 injuries and more than $6 million in property damage. Typically, shorts in electrical lights or open flames from candles, lighters or matches start tree fires. Well-watered trees not only smell better, but they also reduce the risk. Dry and neglected trees are a higher risk and also subject to spontaneous combustion.

**Candles:** Many people don’t heed warnings and safety rules when using candles and many think “it can’t happen to me.” This sense of complacency was shown to be misplaced more than 15000 times last year. According to the National Fire Protection Association, the nation averages 15,600 candle-caused home fires each year. These fires result in 1,270 injuries and 150 deaths. Among the rules of candle safety are:

- Do not leave candles unattended (even for a moment)
- Do use containers such a cans, heat resistant globes and other holder for all candle
- Do keep candles safe distances from plants, draperies and overhead shelves & cabinets.

**Plants and other common poisons:** Keep common baking ingredients such as vanilla and almond extract out of reach. They contain high levels of alcohol and may be harmful to young children if swallowed. Beautiful, but poisonous seasonal plants include azalea, crown of thorns, Christmas cactus, Christmas rose, English and American ivy, and Jerusalem or jimson weed. Holly and mistletoe berries also are poisonous. These plants need to be used with the safety of pets and children in mind. It’s also a good idea to keep the phone number for poison control nearby, or if in doubt, call 9-1-1 right away.

There are many more hazard prevention issues of which to be aware. Many tragic events occur though out the year, but tragedies during the holiday season seem to have an added punch of sadness. With a little effort and attention we can all avoid being “front page news”.

Be safe and enjoy the holidays!
Things to Consider *Before* Winter Storms and Extreme Cold Arrive

As fall ends and the winter season approaches, here are some things to consider in addition to your regular routine for winter emergency preparedness.

**Add the following supplies to your disaster supplies kit**
- Rock salt to melt ice on walkways
- Sand to improve traction
- Snow shovels and other snow removal equipment

**Prepare your home and family**
- Prepare for possible isolation by having sufficient heating fuel; regular fuel sources may be off.
- Winterize your home by insulating walls and attics, caulking and weather-stripping doors and windows, and installing storm windows or covering windows with plastic. Winterize any other structure that may provide shelter for your family, neighbors, livestock or equipment. Clear rain gutters; repair roof leaks and cut away tree branches that could fall on a house or other structure during a storm. Insulate pipes with insulation or newspapers and plastic and allow faucets to drip a little during cold weather to avoid freezing.
- Keep fire extinguishers on hand, and make sure everyone in your house knows how to use them. House fires pose an additional risk, as more people turn to alternate heating sources without taking the necessary safety precautions.
- Learn how to shut off water valves (in case a pipe bursts).
- Know ahead of time what you should do to help elderly or disabled friends, neighbors or employees.

**Prepare your car**
- Check or have a mechanic check the following items on your car:
  - Antifreeze levels - ensure they are sufficient to avoid freezing.
  - Battery and ignition system - should be in top condition and battery terminals should be clean.
  - Brakes - check for wear and fluid levels.
  - Heater and defroster - ensure they work properly.
  - Lights and flashing hazard lights - check for serviceability.
  - Oil - check for level and weight. Heavier oils congeal more at low temperatures and do not lubricate as well.
  - Thermostat - ensure it works properly.
  - Windshield wiper equipment - repair any problems and maintain proper washer fluid level.
- Install good winter tires. Make sure the tires have adequate tread. All-weather radials are usually adequate for most winter conditions. Maintain at least a half tank of gas during the winter season.
- Place a winter emergency kit in each car that includes a shovel, windshield scraper and small broom, and extra hats, socks and mittens.

**Dress for the Weather**
Wear several layers of loose fitting, lightweight, warm clothing rather than one layer of heavy clothing. The outer garments should be tightly woven and water repellent. Wear mittens, which are warmer than gloves, and a hat. Cover your mouth with a scarf to protect your lungs.