The cover features a decorative border of the American flag, with red and white stripes on the left and right sides, and a blue field with white stars at the top and bottom.

FEMA
Region VI

**COMMUNITY
PREPAREDNESS**

Texas Community
Preparedness Annual Report
2025

Texas Community Preparedness-Texas Association of Regional Councils-Annual Report

Community Preparedness Annual Report | FEMA Region 6

Reporting Period: 2025

Executive Summary

Over the past reporting period, Texas Community Preparedness programs made significant strides in building stronger, more resilient communities throughout the state. CERT training expanded to reach more volunteers than ever before, while emergency response support grew to meet increasing demand. This coordinated statewide effort has paid real dividends in preparing Texans for whatever challenges come their way.

These programs have stayed true to the goals outlined in the Texas Homeland Security Strategic Plan, particularly when it comes to developing our emergency response workforce, getting communities ready for action, and ensuring different regions can work together seamlessly when disaster strikes.

What's been especially encouraging is seeing how volunteers have stepped up across Texas. These dedicated citizens have supported everything from major disaster response to smaller-scale community emergencies, building up local response capabilities while getting more people involved in preparedness efforts. The ripple effect has been remarkable – not only are we better prepared as a state, but more Texans understand the importance of being ready and are taking active steps to protect their families and neighbors.

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Community Preparedness/CERT Alignment to the Texas Homeland Security Strategic Plan (2026–2030)

Program / Activity	HSSP Mission Area & Goal	Supporting Objective (2026–2030)	Relevant Priority Actions (2026–2030)	Primary Core Capabilities Supported	How CERT Supports the Strategy
Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Program	Mitigation – Goal 3	Strengthen community preparedness and resilience to reduce disaster impacts	Expand and sustain community preparedness programs; train residents to reduce loss of life and property	Community Resilience; Planning; Public Information and Warning	CERT prepares residents with lifesaving skills that lessen disaster impacts and reduce demand on professional responders.
CERT Training & Train-the-Trainer Courses	Enable – Goal 6	Build and sustain training, planning, and human capital capabilities	Deliver standardized training programs; sustain instructor and volunteer pipelines	Planning; Community Resilience; Operational Coordination	Train-the-Trainer courses ensure long-term CERT sustainability by maintaining local instructional capacity.
CERT Program Management & Sustainment	Enable – Goal 6	Enhance regional and local capacity to manage preparedness programs	Support regional coordination and program sustainment; improve volunteer management	Planning; Operational Coordination	Program management enables COGs and jurisdictions to maintain viable, ready CERT teams.
CERT Integration with VOADs and NGOs	Mitigation – Goal 3 / Enable – Goal 6	Improve coordination of volunteer resources before disasters	Coordinate with VOADs and NGOs; strengthen whole-community preparedness networks	Operational Coordination; Community Resilience	CERT integrates trained volunteers into broader preparedness networks, reducing duplication and improving coordination.
CERT Volunteer Deployment	Respond – Goal 4	Improve effective use of volunteers during	Integrate volunteers into response and	Mass Care Services; Mass Search and Rescue	CERT volunteers support shelters, light

During Incidents		emergency operations	recovery operations	Operations; Operational Coordination	search and rescue, and logistics, allowing responders to focus on life-safety missions.
CERT Volunteer Time Documentation & Reporting	Enable - Goal 6 / Respond - Goal 4	Strengthen accountability and sustainability of volunteer resources	Document volunteer activity and hours; support cost-share and recovery documentation	Planning; Operational Coordination	Documentation supports FEMA cost-share eligibility and improves readiness and recovery accountability.

Quarterly Activity Summary

Please note that this quarterly activity highlights select reported efforts and does not capture all activity occurring statewide across Texas.

Quarter	Key Activities	Training Focus	Activations / Highlights
Q4 2024	Fire rehab, outreach, exercises	Basic CERT, SAR	Wildfires, structure fires
Q1 2025	Winter weather response, planning	CPR/AED, Comms	Severe wind events
Q2 2025	Hurricane preparedness, outreach	CERT, MRC training	Special events, rehab
Q3 2025	Exercise season, recruitment	Instructor expansion	Community events

Training Totals

G-317 Basic CERT Training

In 2025, Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Basic training was held 38 times across Texas, reaching 535 participants and strengthening preparedness in communities large and small. These courses gave residents, volunteers, and local partners the essential skills they need to help their neighborhoods before, during, and after an emergency.

Each CERT Basic session focused on hands-on, practical training from disaster preparedness and light search and rescue to basic medical operations and team organization. Participants worked through real-world scenarios designed to build confidence, improve situational awareness, and teach them how to provide safe, effective assistance until professional responders are on the scene.

The reach and consistency of CERT training in 2025 highlight Texas's ongoing commitment to a whole-community approach to emergency readiness. By making CERT training available in both urban centers and rural areas, the state is helping ensure that more Texans are equipped to respond, support their communities, and strengthen overall resilience when it matters most.

G-428 Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Train-the-Trainer

In 2025, nine CERT Train-the-Trainer (TtT) courses were held across Texas, producing 104 newly qualified CERT instructors. These courses helped expand local training capacity by giving experienced CERT members the tools and knowledge to confidently teach, lead, and sustain CERT programs in their own communities.

By investing in instructor development, Texas is building a stronger foundation for the future, one that ensures CERT Basic training remains consistent, accessible, and high-quality across the state. This growing network of local instructors plays a key role in strengthening community resilience and keeping preparedness efforts strong for years to come.

G-427 Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Program Manager Course

In 2025, the CERT G-427 Program Manager Course was successfully held in Burleson, helping strengthen local and regional capacity to manage and sustain Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) programs. The course covered key aspects of CERT program management, including administration and volunteer coordination, training oversight, and collaboration with local emergency management partners.

Seventeen participants completed the course, each leaving with practical tools, strategies, and best practices to enhance program oversight and long-term sustainability. Their new skills will help ensure CERT programs remain strong and effective, ultimately supporting better-prepared and more resilient communities across Texas.

T-517 Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Master Instructor Course

The T-517 CERT Master Instructor Course, held in The Woodlands, graduated 23 new CERT Master Instructors, further boosting advanced CERT training capacity across Texas. This intensive program prepared seasoned instructors to deliver top-quality CERT training, mentor new trainers, and help grow and strengthen programs throughout the state.

Graduates of the T-517 course now serve as key leaders within Texas's CERT network, helping ensure consistent instruction, expanded training opportunities, and a strong, sustainable foundation for community preparedness statewide.

Region 6 Community Preparedness Awards

REGION 6 COMMUNITY PREPAREDNESS AWARDS HONORING LOCAL CHAMPIONS!



BURLESON CERT
WHOLE COMMUNITY
AWARD

**MAKAYLLA
TALAVERA**
YOUTH AWARD

Whole Community Award Winner-Burleson (city of) CERT

Burleson CERT continues to be a key part of strengthening emergency preparedness, volunteer engagement, and disaster response in the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) region. Through expanded outreach and hands-on training, the program has helped residents develop essential, life-saving skills and provided meaningful opportunities to contribute to community safety and resilience.

The formation of the Burleson CERT Association (BCA) as a nonprofit organization has further supported these efforts by helping secure additional resources, organizing structured training, increasing volunteer participation, and enhancing coordination with local public safety agencies. Collectively, Burleson CERT members have contributed thousands of volunteer hours to preparedness events, emergency exercises, and community education, building a strong foundation of readiness and teamwork.

In 2025, Burleson CERT received the Region 6 Community Preparedness Award in the Whole Community category, recognizing the program's strong partnerships, inclusive approach, and consistent contributions to improving preparedness across diverse groups.

To continue this work, Burleson CERT offers two Basic CERT courses each year, providing participants with practical training in disaster response, fire suppression, first aid, and search and rescue. The team also regularly participates in regional disaster exercises to strengthen coordination and effectiveness among emergency response partners. In addition, Burleson CERT has worked with the Center for Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) to develop specialized training to support individuals with autism and other access and functional needs during emergencies.

Through these ongoing initiatives, Burleson CERT remains committed to helping the community stay prepared, inclusive, and ready to respond when emergencies occur.

Youth Award Winner-Teen CERT Makayla Talavera

At Pasadena Memorial High School (PMHS), Dr. April Barker, Health Science teacher and advisor for HOSA–Future Health Professionals, leads a senior Health Science Practicum that blends classroom instruction with hands-on, real-world experience. Through the program, students earn industry-recognized certifications such as Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) and EKG Technician—giving them the knowledge and skills to react effectively when emergencies strike and professional responders aren't yet on scene.

In Fall 2024, thirty-nine PMHS students earned their Teen CERT certification. This training, a nationally recognized FEMA curriculum delivered locally through the Harris County Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management, taught them vital emergency response skills- fire suppression, search and rescue, and disaster medical operations. The goal is simple but powerful: give students the confidence and ability to take action when every second matters.

For one student, Makaylla Talavera, those lessons became life-changing.

After completing the CERT Final Exercise on October 16, 2024, Makaylla developed a passion for emergency management and selected CERT Skills as her competition event for the Texas HOSA Area 6 Competition. Her dedication paid off—she and her partner advanced through the skills round, earning second place and qualifying for the state conference.

Just hours after receiving that award, Makaylla's training was put to the ultimate test. While volunteering as a HOSA first aid responder at a large Texas Color Guard Circuit event on the PMHS campus, an active-shooter situation erupted. Amid chaos and fear, Makaylla's training took over. When an adult victim collapsed nearby with a gunshot wound, she immediately assessed the scene, helped move the victim to safety, and began providing care.

Relying on her CERT medical training, Makaylla quickly controlled severe bleeding, recognized signs of shock, and directed bystanders to assist, calling 911, maintaining safety, and staying calm under pressure. She kept the victim conscious, communicated vital information to paramedics upon arrival, and comforted those around her during an unimaginably high-stress moment.

Her quick thinking and composure saved a life.

The actions Makaylla took that day show exactly why Teen CERT programs matter. They don't just teach first aid or disaster response; they teach leadership, teamwork, and the ability to stay calm and capable when others can't. In Makaylla's case, that training made the difference between tragedy and survival.

Her story is a powerful reminder that investing in youth preparedness programs like Teen CERT isn't just about education, it's about empowering students to protect themselves, their peers, and their communities when every moment counts.



Local Emergency Management presenting Makayla with R6 Award/Dr. April Barker with Makayla Talavera

Why Community Preparedness Awards Matter to Local Jurisdictions

Community preparedness awards play a vital role in recognizing the hard work and teamwork behind local efforts to keep communities ready for emergencies. For cities, counties, school districts, and volunteer programs, these awards are more than a plaque or a headline; they're a meaningful acknowledgment of the time, training, and dedication that go into preparedness, response, and recovery. Recognition at the regional or state level validates that local efforts are not only effective but also aligned with proven emergency management practices.

These awards also serve a larger purpose: they spotlight what's working. Programs like CERT, Teen CERT, and Whole Community initiatives show how volunteer involvement, inclusive planning, and collaboration across sectors lead to real, measurable impacts. Sharing these successes helps other jurisdictions learn from one another, sparking new ideas and raising the overall standard for preparedness across Texas and beyond.

Recognition can also help sustain and strengthen these programs over time. It gives local leaders something tangible to show stakeholders—the value of investing in readiness, training, and volunteer engagement. For volunteer-driven efforts, especially, being

recognized energizes participants, supports recruitment, and reinforces the pride that comes with serving their communities.

In the end, community preparedness awards celebrate the spirit of resilience. They honor the residents, volunteers, and partners who work side by side to reduce risks, protect lives, and build communities that are ready to face whatever comes their way. It's a reminder that preparedness is not just a government responsibility, it's a team effort, and every contribution matters.

Keeping Teams Engaged- Harris County CERT Rodeo

The Harris County CERT Rodeo is a hands-on, scenario-based training event that brings together CERT volunteers from across the region to sharpen their disaster response skills and strengthen teamwork. In 2025, Harris County celebrated the 18th annual CERT Rodeo, nearly two decades of continuous commitment to volunteer training and community preparedness.

Throughout the event, CERT teams rotate through a series of practical skill stations covering disaster medical operations, light search and rescue, fire safety, damage assessment, and incident command. These real-world scenarios give volunteers the chance to practice what they've learned, improve their efficiency, and gain confidence in responding safely and effectively during an emergency.

But the CERT Rodeo is about more than just technical skills. It's also a powerful opportunity for volunteers, emergency management professionals, and local agencies to come together, share ideas, and learn from one another. This spirit of collaboration is what has made the event a cornerstone of community preparedness in Harris County.

After 18 years, the CERT Rodeo continues to build a strong network of trained, connected volunteers who stand ready to support their neighbors when disasters strike—proof that shared training and teamwork can make all the difference when every second counts.

Notable Deployments

Mart High School Teen CERT Supports Marlin Amid Water Crisis

When a citywide water outage hit Marlin, Texas, and forced schools to close, the Teen Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) from nearby Mart High School quickly stepped in to help. These trained students rolled up their sleeves and worked alongside local partners to distribute bottled water to residents who needed it most, showing what community support looks like in action.

MART HS TEEN CERT



The Mart High School Teen CERT program—recognized nationally for its excellence—teaches students practical skills like first aid, fire safety, and basic CPR. But it’s more than a training program; it’s a group of young people committed to serving their community. From organizing blood drives to assisting during real emergencies, the students consistently demonstrate maturity, teamwork, and leadership.

Their quick response during Marlin’s water crisis highlights the real-world impact of youth preparedness programs. By applying their skills and stepping up when their neighbors needed help, the Mart Teen CERT students proved how powerful youth involvement can be in strengthening communities and reminding everyone that even in tough times, help often comes from just down the road.

Texas State Guard CERT Training Integration

In April 2025, the Texas State Guard launched its first pilot of the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program during annual training held April 25–27 at Martindale Army Airfield in San Antonio. Led by the 4th Battalion, 6th Brigade, the training brought 35 Texas State Guard members through the full CERT curriculum—marking an important step in integrating volunteer-based response skills into military readiness.

During the training, Guardsmen learned key all-hazards response techniques, including disaster organization, light search and rescue, medical triage, fire safety, and team-based incident management. These skills directly strengthen the Guard’s mission to support civil authorities and enhance coordination with local emergency management, first responders, and community-based volunteer groups during disasters.

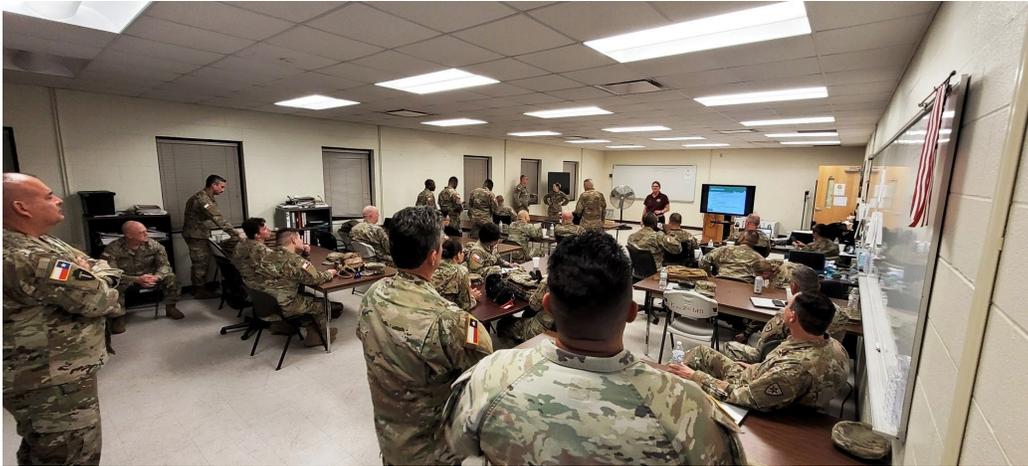
The success of the pilot program was a turning point for statewide preparedness. As a result, CERT training has now been formally incorporated as a required part of the Texas State Guard’s ongoing training program. This ensures members across the Guard are consistently trained to nationally recognized CERT standards, improving interoperability and collaboration with community responders in real-world emergencies.

By the end of the 2025 reporting period, 273 Texas State Guard members from multiple brigades and units had completed CERT training, with many more scheduled as implementation continues. This ongoing effort represents a forward-looking investment in Texas’ emergency response capability—building a stronger, more unified force ready to serve alongside local partners when disasters strike.

Unit	RMS Strength	# PAX Deployed	# PAX Available	# PAX Trained (CERT)	# Need CERT Training
1BDE	314	21	293	11	282
2BDE	314	17	297	71	243
3BDE	265	45	220	81	139
6BDE	224	26	198	87	108
HHC	136	7	129	0	12
RTC	258	10	248	23	225
TOTALS	1511	126	1385	273	883

Texas State Guard CERT Training – Field & Classroom Integration

The following images document Texas State Guard personnel participating in CERT classroom instruction and hands-on field exercises. These visuals highlight the integration of CERT principles into military training environments, reinforcing interoperability, incident command familiarity, and lifesaving skills that directly support civil authorities during disaster response.



Texas State Guard personnel receive CERT classroom instruction to reinforce disaster response coordination and ICS principles.



Texas State Guard members conduct patient movement and rescue techniques during CERT hands-on training.



Texas State Guard and CERT instructors coordinate during applied field exercises, strengthening joint response capabilities.

CERT Program Quantitative Highlights

The following highlights show the reach, consistency, and real-world impact of CERT programs across Texas. They demonstrate how teams of all sizes contribute in meaningful ways to preparedness, response, and recovery efforts throughout the state. While these numbers provide a snapshot of activity, they represent only part of what CERT volunteers accomplish every day. Countless trainings, exercises, deployments, and outreach efforts take place regularly in communities across Texas, often quietly but always with purpose.

Taken together, these examples offer a clear picture of the steady, hands-on role CERT programs play in strengthening local readiness and supporting communities before, during, and after emergencies.

CERT Program	Key Quantitative Metrics	Operational Impact	Reporting Period
Harris County Citizen Corps CERT	61 training courses conducted; multiple CERT Basic classes delivered	Largest volume CERT training provider statewide; sustained instructor capacity	Q2 2025
Hays County CERT	6 emergency activations; multiple fire rehab deployments	Supported local disasters and non-declared incidents across multiple jurisdictions	Q4 2024
Walker County CERT (Huntsville)	7 fire responses; 3 weather monitoring events	Firefighter rehab, radio communications, and situational awareness support	Q4 2024–Q1 2025
Brazoria County Citizen Corps (MRC/CERT)	600+ preparedness kits distributed; 600+ residents reached at single event	High-impact public outreach and medical surge support	Q2 2025
Burleson County CERT	5 fire rehab activations in two months	Sustained wildfire response support across rural jurisdictions	Q4 2024
St. Edward's University Campus CERT	70 individuals trained in CPR/AED, Naloxone, and fire safety	Campus resilience and student-led preparedness capacity	Q1–Q2 2025

These examples highlight how flexible and adaptable CERT programs are across Texas, whether in big cities, small towns, or on school campuses. Each program looks a little different in size and focus, but all share the same goal: building stronger, more prepared

communities. Together, their efforts make a real, measurable impact on Texas’s overall readiness and help grow a capable, committed volunteer response force statewide.

CERT in Action: Visual Highlights from Across Texas

The images that follow showcase CERT programs in action across Texas, including training sessions, disaster exercises, firefighter rehab operations, community outreach, and recognition events. Together, they bring to life the stories and data in this report, showing the real impact of CERT volunteers working in communities of all kinds and in all parts of the state.



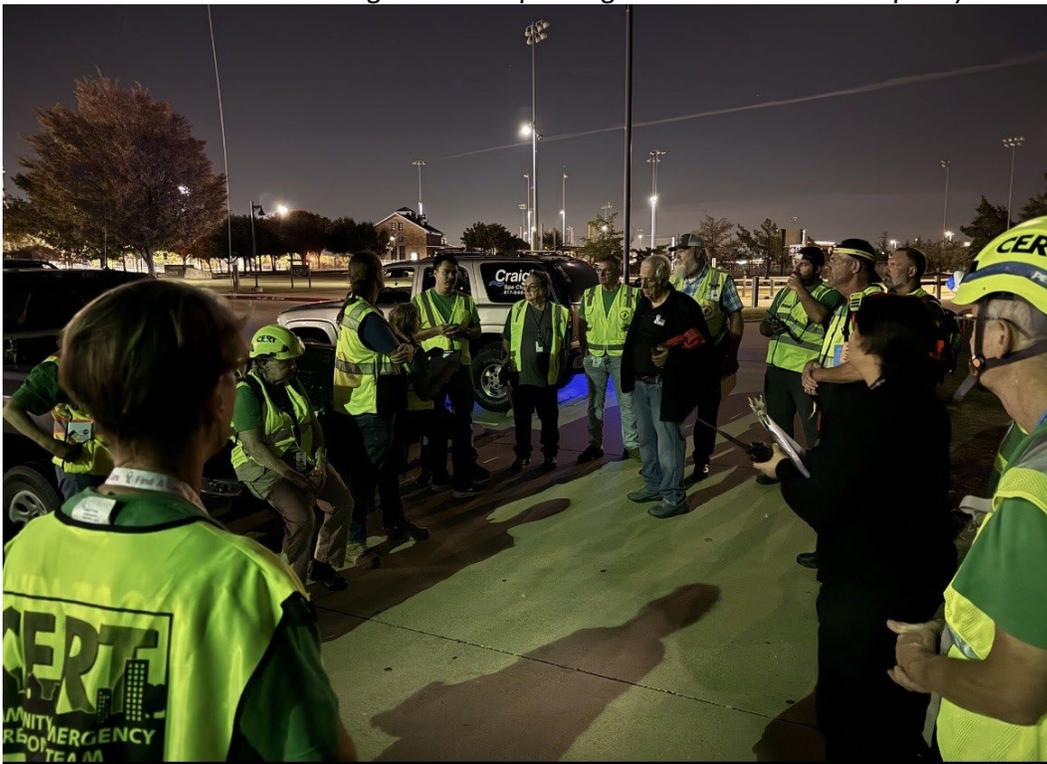
Bedford CERT conducting an operational briefing and coordination.



Fort Worth CERT supporting large-scale community event operations.



CERT Train-the-Trainer graduates expanding statewide instructor capacity.



Burleson County CERT conducting nighttime operational briefing and coordination.



CERT volunteers conducting fire extinguisher training



Belton CERT volunteers are recognized with the President's award for service and leadership contributions.

Appendix A: Programs by Council of Governments

Community Preparedness programs are supported across multiple Councils of Governments (COGs), including AACOG, ATCOG, BVCOG, CAPCOG, CBCOG, CTCOG, CVCOG, DETCOG, ETCOG, GCRPC, HGAC, HOTCOG, LRGVDC, MRGDC, NORTEX, NCTCOG, PBRPC, PRPC, RGCOG, SETRPC, SPAG, TCOG, WCTCOG. Programs include CERT, Citizen Corps Councils, Medical Reserve Corps, Fire Corps, and Teen CERT initiatives.

Appendix B: Photo Credits & Program Contributions

Photographs included in this report were submitted by local CERT programs and regional partners and depict training, exercises, emergency response, outreach, and recognition events conducted during the reporting period.

Attachment A: Texas Community Preparedness Program Council Highlights.