

Volcano Community Response Team

Aug. 4, 2018 minutes

Alternate Team Leader Chris Corley convened the team's regular monthly meeting at 9:05 a.m. at Cooper Center. Team Leader Nancy Lakin is on Oahu. Also present: Patti Pinto, Claudia Ziroti, Ellen Train, Teresa Evangelista, Hank Schultz, Duane Nakanishi, Bob Becker, Ellen O'Dunn, Doug Wilson, Sher Glass, Ting Ortiz, Debra Chaffin, Leigh Critchlow and Paul Lakin.

Patti noted the approach of Hurricane Hector, at present Category 3, expected to pass south of the Big Island by the middle of next week. She reminded us that, as CERTs, we are assigned to help officials keep abreast of weather conditions throughout the community. CERTs are asked to contribute weather status reports online and via ham radio from "right where you are." Go to hawaiicert.org to download standardized forms for reporting.

"We really do mean you, each and every one of you," said Patti. "Your reports are valued. Everybody's reporting is important."

Ellen O'Dunn said that her recent meeting with Mayor Harry Kim "went really well," as she informed him of the important ways CERT has been helping Big Island communities and the need for additional training sessions to beef up the ranks. Certified Hawaii County Fire Department personnel are required to coordinate the training, and they haven't been available due to other demands upon their scheduling.

Ellen said she has a unique perspective by virtue of her Volcano Out and About Facebook page. She stressed how important CERT volunteers have been to the community and how much area residents appreciated recent door-to-door notifications relating to health and safety issues in connection with the Kilauea eruption. "Only a handful" of CERTs turned out to help with the door-to-door notifications, Ellen noted, pointing to the need for more trained volunteers.

She told the mayor that, just by their presence, "CERT gives a kind of visual reassurance."

Ellen said she "put in my two cents worth" and came away feeling that she had connected with the mayor on a personal level, and had, thereby, connected him to the community and its situation.

She said Kim thanked her for coming to see him and said fire personnel have been refocused on eruption-related emergency response efforts. He asked Bill Hanson (also at the meeting), who coordinates CERT programs for the Hawaii County Civil Defense Agency, to work on planning additional training sessions..

Chris conducted a short quiz, awarding tiny fold-up can openers for correct answers to questions related to the Incident Command System. It is recommended that all CERTs complete Independent Study Courses 100.b, 200.b, 700.a and 800.b. She asks that by the September meeting we complete at least one of the courses. Go to: <http://training.fema.gov/IS/NIMS.asp>. Doug said details relating to the courses are available on the Volcano Community Association website under the Volcano Emergency Response Plan.

Patti and Claudia discussed and demonstrated and offered tips for creating emergency bucket stashes to serve us in emergencies. Some bucket attachments and components are available locally, with more online.

"Use your bucket list to get you started," advised Claudia. Then tailor your buckets to fit individual and family needs and desires.

"Get ready now," she stressed. In other words: BEFORE, not after or during an emergency.

Claudia will circulate additional info relating to emergency preparedness via email.

Relating to our Volcano CERT re-purposed shipping container at Cooper Center: Patti, Debra and Ting will work on getting our team's Search and Rescue buckets ready for deployment in an emergency.

Doug gave updates on the Volcano Emergency Response Plan and VERTeam:

"About 36 people have expressed interest in volunteering for the VERP so far. The VERP planning group continues to meet monthly to work on the overall Plan and the Volcano Emergency Response Team (VERT) is meeting every two weeks to build out the organizational structure of the Plan," said Doug.

“Several leadership positions have been filled to date that include the Road Clearing Unit Leader. We are close to filling the Food Unit Leader position, which will provide meals for both CERT and VERP volunteers during a disaster. We continue to solicit volunteers for the VERP, so please contact me if you know of anyone interested in volunteering,” said Doug.

Our next Volcano CERT meeting will be at 9 a.m. Saturday, Sept. 1, at Cooper Center.

Respectfully submitted,
Leigh Critchlow, secretary