



Miramar CERT Newsletter Activity Update

City of Miramar

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Miramar CERT Members become Skywarn Certified on October 22, 2009

They listened to Robert Molleda, National Warning Coordination Meteorologist from the Miami office of the National Weather Service speak about various aspects of the weather as he taught them about the weather and what Skywarn® Spotters should report to the National Weather Service.

This is South Florida. We have hurricanes, not tornadoes, right? WRONG! Miramar CERT members who attended the Skywarn® certification class know differently!

Imagine an urban tornado touching ground in downtown Miami. It happened. May of 1997. It's documented in photos. What about a tornado at night – in Bayside? Those who were

there in 2005 can verify that one! August 14th, 2008 in Hialeah – you guessed it – a tornado touched down. May 31, 2009 – Palm Beach Gardens experienced a tornado.

Tornadoes DO happen in South Florida, so the next time you hear that tornado warning, pay attention! A tornado could happen here!

Miramar CERT members who attended the Skywarn® certification class, will not ignore those warnings in the future. Instead, they will safely look to the sky to report specific observations directly to the National Weather Service in Miami Florida. With the sophisticated equipment, the forecasters at the NWS know quite a bit, but even the most advanced equipment can't observe what is seen at the

ground level. This is where the Skywarn® Spotters play a big role conveying pertinent information directly to the forecasters.

The Miramar CERT Team Leadership committee did a professional job with the preparations and planning for this event that was open to not only CERT members but to the community as well.

We had different city CERT programs within Broward County attend as well.

Storm spotter call cards registered with the National Weather Service were provided to all participants that completed the training session.

Focus on Fire Safety

Electrical fires are pervasive throughout the United States, causing injury, claiming lives, and resulting in large losses of property. Most electrical fires result from problems with faulty electrical out-

lets and old wiring. Problems with extension/appliance cords and plugs also cause many home electrical fires. To help prevent an electrical fire in your home, routinely check electrical ap-

pliances and wiring and replace all worn, old, or damaged cords immediately.

Causes of Electrical Fires

According to the National

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Special points of interest:

Next CERT Basic Class February 2009 – schedule is online at: www.ci.miramar.fl.us/em/cert.html

Next Team Leadership meeting TBA at FR Station 84 from 7pm-8:30pm

Fire Safety Focus continued.....

"Individual commitment to a group effort - that is what makes a team work, a company work, a society work, a civilization work."

Vince Lombardi

Fire Protection Association:

☛ Lamps, light fixtures and light bulbs (28%) and fixed wiring (22%) account for the largest share of fires among major types of electrical distribution equipment.

☛ Cords and plugs (39%) account for the largest share of civilian deaths.

☛ Lamps, light fixtures, and light bulbs (30%) ac-

count for the largest share of electrical residential building fires each year

360 estimated civilian deaths due to electrical fires each year

1,000 estimated civilian injuries due to electrical fires each year

Electrician so you do not have to use extension cords.

☛ Follow the manufacturer's instructions for plugging an appliance into a receptacle outlet.

☛ Avoid overloading outlets. Plug only one high-wattage appliance

into each receptacle outlet at a time.

Many avoidable electrical fires can be traced to misuse of electric cords, such as overloading circuits, poor maintenance, and running cords under rugs or in high traffic areas. Faulty electrical systems also cause many fires. In urban areas, faulty wiring accounts for 33% of residential electrical fires.

\$995 million estimated direct property loss from electrical fires each year

Safety Precautions

☛ Replace or repair loose or frayed cords on all electrical devices.

☛ Avoid running extension cords across

doorways or under carpets.

☛ In homes with small children, unused wall sockets and extension-cord receptacles should have plastic safety covers.

☛ Consider having additional circuits or outlets added by a qualified electrician.

Electrical fires occur most often during the months of December and January, winter months that call for more indoor activities and increases in lighting, heating, and appliance use. Fifteen percent of residential electrical fires start in the bedroom.

By the Numbers: Electrical Fires

28,300 estimated num-

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doorways or under carpets.

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Fire Safety Focus continued.....

Warning Signs of Electrical Dangers

- ☞ Frequent or re-occurring issues with blowing fuses or tripping circuit breakers
- ☞ A tingling sensation when you touch an electrical appliance or other metal objects
- ☞ Discolored or warm wall outlets, or sparks from an outlet

- ☞ A persistent burning smell coming from an appliance, room, or area
- ☞ Flickering or dimming lights



Miramar CERT Guest Speaker Series

In 2009 the Miramar CERT program invited speakers from the American Red Cross, Broward Humane Society, National Weather Service, Miramar Fire Rescue to discuss different topics that pertain to disaster response and preparedness in our community. Several CERT members hosted the speaking engagements by

inviting the speaker and conducting all event preparations. Some of our volunteers have also participated in CERT regional exercises and have represented Miramar in CERT academies throughout the region. They have brought back their experience and have shared information and what they learned with

the rest of the Miramar CERT membership. If you are interested in inviting a speaker to discuss a pertinent disaster preparedness topic for our community and members please contact us at 954-602-4842 or 954-602-4883.

*"The greatest oak was once a little nut who held its ground."
"Unknown"*

Miramar CERT Team Leadership Committee

The Miramar CERT program created a Team Leadership Committee in 2009 and it is comprised of the following members:

- Durlan Castro
- Gladys Castro
- Deidre Douglas
- Lucio Garay

- Vidal Garcia
- Debra Mckoy
- Earl Richards
- Brian Seidler
- Doris Tocabens
- Glendon Walker
- Charmaine Walker
- As a committee member

CERT volunteers can be part of the planning process for several activities and events in the city and beyond. They obtain program updates from the CERT Coordinator and have a forum to share ideas and express their interest in community engagement for disaster pre-



Miramar CERT Basic Class Graduations



In 2009 the Miramar CERT program graduated three Basic CERT classes for a total of 58 new members. CERT Class 11 graduated on December 4, 2009.

Areas of concentration covered in the comprehensive 4 week CERT course:

Awareness of medical, environmental, and fire related emergencies

Basic fire suppression techniques and hazardous material awareness

Medical treatment of the sick and injured

Basic search and rescue operations
Signs of potential building collapse

Planning and forming a neighborhood response team
Post storm operations: Assisting police and fire departments
Establishing the neighborhood command post

Disaster Psychology
Documentation of important data.

We currently began CERT Class 12 on 02/08/10 and the participants are eager to learn and become part of the membership.

“Vision - Vision is not seeing things as they are but as they will be”

Miramar CERT Coordinator Message

I am delighted with the progress and growth the Miramar CERT program has had in the past year and a half. We have graduated several new classes and hence our membership has increased accordingly. We are working on better organizing our CERT membership throughout the city to form teams that can assist city government in a large scale disaster response. Members are also engaging in regular city events throughout the year like

concerts, fundraisers for public charity, job fair seminars and other events where they can assist the city in different forms. The CERT program is a nationally recognized volunteer effort that is viewed as an essential component of any large scale community emergency response.

I am proud to have this program established at the local city level here in our Miramar community. I look forward to the continued

growth of the Miramar CERT program in 2010 and beyond. I would also like to extend a warm Thank you and express my gratitude to all the CERT members who have graduated with us and have volunteered their free time to stay in touch with us and engage in city sponsored events.

Miguel Hidalgo, M.P.A., F.P.E.M.

Miramar CERT Volunteer Recognition Award 2010



On March 20, 2010 the Broward County CERT Coordinator's Committee as part of the Fire Chiefs Association of Broward County (FCABC) will host a Volunteer Awards Luncheon for CERT members at the Signature Grand Ballroom in Davie, Florida. A guest speaker and plaque awards will be distributed to volunteers who exhibited leadership qualities, consistency and contributions to their city programs.

More information will be sent to Miramar CERT membership via email as the event comes closer.

Miramar CERT

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The Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Program educates people about disaster preparedness for hazards that may impact their area and trains them in basic disaster response skills, such as fire safety, light search and rescue, team organization, and disaster medical operations.

Using the training learned in the classroom and during exercises, CERT members can assist others in their neighborhood or workplace following a large scale disaster event when professional responders are not immediately available to help.

CERT members also are encouraged to support emergency response agencies by taking a more active role in emergency preparedness projects in their community.

In the event of a disaster, trained citizens can react as teams and provide basic care that will help limit further injury to disaster victims and will lessen the possibility of further damage to property.

