GT-CERT Meeting

The Georgia Tech Police Department Office of Emergency Preparedness will be hosting a meeting for all members of GT-CERT. This will be an opportunity to meet other team members, to ask questions about, and to share ideas for developing our CERT program.

Date: Tuesday June 7, 2011
Time: 2:30-3:30
Location: Piedmont Room, Student Center

Please RSVP to jkraft3@gatech.edu if you are able to attend.
We look forward to seeing you there!

Do you know of someone interested in taking the CERT class? Please have them contact jkraft3@gatech.edu to find out about the class we’ll be having later this summer!

DON’T FORGET: Complete all forms on the GT-CERT website and send them to Frank Stanley (GT mail code 0440) as soon as possible.

Adding to Your CERT Bag

We encourage all GT-CERT members to add to and customize their supply bags. Helpful additions include small tool kits, triage supplies, and additional first aid material.

Remember, you know your equipment better than anyone else, and only you have control over its condition. Keep batteries charged and ensure that all gear is in good shape. Have your CERT bag easily accessible in case of an emergency.
Summer Risks

Although summer months generally mean vacation and relaxation, there are also some hazards that are present during this time of year.

Heat related illnesses, which were discussed in a previous newsletter, are related to the failure of the body’s cooling system. These conditions, heat exhaustion and heat stroke, are generally led to by over exertion and dehydration, a lack of adequate fluid water in the body. Symptoms include dry or sticky mouth, dark urine, sunken eyes, lethargy, vomiting, and diarrhea. This condition can be prevented by consuming fluids regularly. Victims should be given fluids slowly, as a large amount of fluids could cause vomiting, contributing to the dehydration. Severe cases of dehydration should be treated at the hospital. However, hyperhydration, or over hydration, must also be considered, as too much water in the system can also have negative effects. Water should be consumed in small amounts and regularly to prevent both of these illnesses.

Insects and insect-borne diseases are also hazards of summer. The West Nile virus and Lyme disease are carried by mosquitoes and deer ticks, respectively. Please follow the links for more information on these diseases. If you believe you have contracted one of these diseases, seek medical attention. The insects themselves may pose a risk to those allergic to bites or stings. People do not always know about these allergies, so responders should be aware of symptoms such as difficulty breathing or severe swelling. Those that do know of allergies may carry an injector with them, and may ask for the assistance of a responder to administer the medication. Venomous snakes and spiders are also more active in the summer months.

Poisonous plants cause irritation which may lead to serious infections after brushing against a plant. If you come into contact, with a plant, wash the affected area immediately with soap and water. It is, however, still likely that you will get a rash from the contact. Wearing long, snug fitting clothing, although neither comfortable nor stylish in summer, will help reduce the impact of insects and poisonous plants. Have a safe and fun summer!

Suspicious Package

Do you know how to respond if you find a suspicious package? Suspicious packages can be of any shape or size. Indicators include the following:

- Excessive postage
- Poorly written or misspelled address
- Exposed wires
- Odors, leaks, or stains
- People beginning to feel ill
- Package making noise
- Threat written on package

The two key concerns with suspicious packages are explosive and biological threats. If you suspect that a bomb is present in a suspicious package, or if there is a stated threat made regarding the package, contact the police immediately, preferably using a hard-line telephone. If you are holding the package, set it down gently on a flat surface, then calmly leave the area, contact the police, and have others leave the area if it is possible to do so. Be available when responders arrive, and be aware that they may have many questions for you regarding the situation.

Biological threats, sometimes referred to as white powder threats, must be responded to differently. The area or building should once again be evacuated as quickly as possible, and all heat and air conditioning systems should be turned off. Seal the room as best as possible. Anyone who has handled the package should be isolated away from others to prevent the spread of the contaminant.

If you have any suggestions or would like to submit anything for the newsletter, please send them to jkraft3@gatech.edu.
CERT News

CERT Training Reminder

Family Preparedness

- Consider hazards most likely to affect your home and family
- Attempt to remove hazards in home through proper maintenance
- Develop procedures for each emergency
- Make an escape plan with exits from every room in your house
- PRACTICE emergency procedures with your family
- Have family members gather supplies for if you need to be away from home and keep them accessible

Let us know what you’re doing! GT-CERT is always interested in community service opportunities!
E-mail jkraft3@gatech.edu

Important Links:

- www.police.gatech.edu
- www.alerts.gatech.edu
- Facebook—Search “Georgia Tech Office of Emergency Preparedness,” and “Georgia Tech Police”
- www.facebook.com/GaTechCERT
- www.citizencorps.gov/cert/
- GT-CERT Website

The Georgia Tech Community Emergency Response team is a group of students, faculty and staff that can be called upon in the event of an emergency to act in a support role for the duration of emergency response. Our goal as CERT members is to help prepare ourselves and our for emergency situations by volunteering in all aspects of emergency preparation, including learning first aid and light search and rescue to act as first responders, and the distribution of literature to inform others of how they can prepare themselves. Through continued training and preparation we can do the most good for the greatest number of people.

A Massachusetts CERT group has seen lots of success in work with fire departments and Boy Scout groups. They have assisted in response to severe winter weather by staffing shelters for displaced persons during the storm. They have also been of assistance in support roles on fire scenes and in searches through wooded areas. They have grown through word of mouth and transitions from Boy Scout programs to the program, but are looking to expand their program even further.

Do you have ideas for future GT-CERT events or training? We would love to hear from you! We are looking forward to getting CERT members involved in the planning of your CERT program. If you are interested in being part of the GT-CERT Council for planning and logistics, please contact Jason Kraft at jkraft3@gatech.edu

Or send us a message on the Georgia Tech CERT Facebook page!