

City of Albany
Fire Department

What does an ALERT Block Captain do?

A Block Captain's primary role is to help neighbors with a common interest in Disaster Preparedness and to help organize their block or building and form ALERT teams. The Block Captain in consultation with block participants makes decisions regarding meeting dates, times, frequency, location and agendas. Typical block captain activities may include but are not limited to the following:

- Organize meetings by finding a place, setting a time and notifying every home or residence on the block, or in their building
- Arrange meeting agendas with guest speakers or suggesting topics and activities to be undertaken by the ALERT team
- Recruit others to help as Co-Captains, form or join subcommittees, or take responsibility for needed specific tasks
- Attend sector, or citywide meetings with other Block Captains, and form working coalitions

Different blocks throughout Albany have successfully implemented a wide variety of programs and disaster preparedness activities. ALERT operates on the premise that anything you do is a step in the right direction. There are many guidelines and suggestions for activities but there is no prescribed approach. Each block is free to decide upon its own priorities, programs and actions, and manage their ALERT teams as they see fit. ALERT team activities include but are not limited to:

- Formation of sub-committees with assigned responsibilities in an emergency, such as damage assessment, search and rescue, first aid, etc.
- Holding garage sales to raise funds for first aid, disaster kits or ALERT team supplies. Help organize block or home parties.
- Completion of information questionnaires to determine special needs, skills or resources of people on the block.
- Mapping and marking of utility shutoffs for every house on the block.
- Information and education meetings featuring guest speakers or local experts that may even live in their own community.
- Prepare and distribute regular newsletters to announce meetings, report activities, and communicate with those who may choose to not be actively involved.
- Participate in a city wide Disaster Drill, and any other City sponsored trainings. Promote the team or ALERT program at city festivals and events.