

Sample Letter:

Regarding: Los Angeles Fire Department CERT Unit

To Whom It May Concern,

The CERT curriculum and program was conceived in Los Angeles by members of the Los Angeles Fire Department after they witnessed hundreds of civilians get injured after trying to help trapped victims immediately after earthquakes in Japan and Mexico City. They realized it is human nature to want to help after a disaster – but to do it safely takes a path of education.

The current CERT Unit consists of 8 seasoned FireFighter Instructors who support our City of over 4 million residents by teaching approximately 500 students a year in emergency preparedness and disaster response.

These 8 FireFighter Instructors teach the 17.5-hour CERT course over a period of 7 weeks to prepare communities throughout Los Angeles with skills to be better prepared before a disaster – and also how to be safer when responding after a disaster.

The CERT Graduates:

- Most CERT graduates return to their communities equipped to help their neighbors and families become better prepared for disasters and emergency situations.

- Some active graduates continue their education by attending monthly skills training and refreshers.

- Others become leaders in their communities by becoming CERT Battalion and Bureau Coordinators. These Coordinators, who are located throughout the City, support their area by hosting regular skills training as well as providing preparedness outreach at events and fairs.

- The most committed CERT graduates are nominated and invited to join the CERT Call-Out team. This elite group of CERTs are sworn-in and become integrated into LAFD incidents and events. Their work can relieve an engine company from downed-power lines, provide hydration and rehab for exhausted FireFighters, provide Family Reunification (Re-Pop) support and help with Fire Patrol on red flag days.

- o In the last 16 months, the Call-Out Team reported to 238 incidents and provided 840 hours of free volunteer support services.

I would like the CERT Unit to continue operating at full-capacity under the guidance and direction of the LAFD where it was originally conceived. if the Los Angeles Fire Department cannot sustain a

successful CERT Program, in my opinion, the optics for our City would be diminished.

CERT exists because communities will recover faster emotionally & economically if the people are prepared to take care of themselves after a disaster.