

Citizens asked to join response team

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Chase and Perkins County residents are asked to become part of an emergency response team to assist local law and fire officials in times of disaster.

Perkins County Emergency Manager, James Brueggeman; Chase County Emergency Manager, Paul Kunnemann; and Emergency Response Coordinator for Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department, Heidi Wheeler seek residents to join a Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program, which educates people about disaster preparedness for hazards that may impact their area and trains them in basic disaster response skills.

“The simple fact is that response by local law, fire and other officials in a disaster situation only goes so far. Having volunteers trained and ready to also respond is critical for the positive outcome of a potential disaster,” Kunnemann said.

Volunteers would complete 20 hours of training to be qualified for the team, which would include disaster response skills in fire safety, light search and rescue, team organization and disaster medical operations.

Eight people are required for a team to be created. Once eight volunteers have been identified, a class training date will be set, Wheeler said. The training will be paid for with grant money from Homeland Security.

Those who would like to volunteer for the CERT program, or who have questions, are asked to call Wheeler at 308-882-4269 or 308-345-4223. Residents may also email Wheeler at erc@swhealth.ne.gov.