

Preparation is a priority: County Emergency Response Team trains 23 in Stillwater

Stillwater Township- 23 participants in the County Emergency Response Team (CERT) recently completed an intensive training program held in Stillwater, concluding with a practical and written exam on November 16, 2024. CERT is a volunteer program developed by the Los Angeles Fire Department in 1985 and established under the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to teach citizens to better prepare for natural disasters and other emergencies in their communities.

County residents from several towns, including Stillwater, Hopatcong, and more, attended the 5-day course at the Stillwater Township Fire Department and Municipal Building.

“Their presence gave the participants confidence and encouragement,” Tsadilas said, “It also allowed those organizations to better understand the functions of CERT.”

CERT training equips volunteers to take on simple tasks like gathering pertinent information while waiting for professional responders to arrive at an emergency scene, but also covers a wide range of practical information ranging from fire prevention and first aid to identifying and treating shock and psychological trauma. The course also emphasizes that one's own safety is the highest priority.

Upon successful completion of the training, Tsadilas said that volunteers were awarded a certificate of achievement and a backpack with safety equipment.

“The unselfish nature of these CERT volunteers demonstrates their commitment to keeping their communities safe,” Tsadilas said, “Preparing for natural disasters is serious business and has become an urgent priority for all of us and for our country.”

To learn more about CERT or upcoming trainings in Sussex County, contact Maureen Tsadilas at windmor9@gmail.com.