

# **What should I do to become an Emergency Management Volunteer?**

A requirement to be a volunteer is training. Much of the classroom training is offered at FCEM&HS. Many training subjects are offered online. Best of all, almost all of the training offered is free! To volunteer for any organization, it depends on the amount of time a citizen has to invest in becoming a volunteer. A volunteer is ready to respond in times of need, is willing to help FCEM&HS with county-wide emergencies and disasters, is self-sufficient and has planned and exercised their plan with family and neighbors to know what to do before, during and after those emergencies and disasters faced in their community and Franklin County.

The following steps are highly recommended for citizens and volunteers:

## **NOAA Weather (All Hazards) Radio (NWR)**

Why do I need a [NOAA Weather \(All Hazards\) Radio](#)?

The NOAA radio is a primary warning for all hazards. The National Weather Service (NWS) along with local, state, and federal authorities utilizes the Emergency Alert System (EAS) to broadcast warnings, watches, emergencies, and statements in our area.

Click [here](#) for a list of the EAS Event Codes / NWR Specific Area Message Encoding codes.

Click [here](#) for the NWS and the EAS Fact Sheet.

Citizens and volunteers need to rely on their NOAA radio in order to react to the information received.

**We highly recommend each Franklin County residence acquire a NOAA Weather (All Hazards) Radio as it may one day save your life!**

Typically, these radios are available in retail and general stores and start at around \$30.

## **Acquiring Insurance**

We also highly recommend every citizen and volunteer acquire insurance to protect their home, property, and more importantly, their family.

The following information is from the [Ohio Department of Insurance](#):

- Click [here](#) for the Guide to Homeowners Insurance.
- Click [here](#) for information on insurance for renters.
- Click [here](#) for the Guide to Automobile Insurance.
- Click [here](#) for other consumer insurance information.

## **General Preparedness Training**

Here is some general preparedness training from FEMA:

- Take FEMA Independent Study (IS) courses.
  1. [IS-22: Are You Ready? An In-depth Guide to Citizen Preparedness](#)
  2. [IS-10: Animals in Disasters: Awareness and Preparedness](#)
  3. [IS-55: Household Hazardous Materials – A Guide for Citizens](#)
  4. [IS-394: Protecting Your Home or Small Business From Disaster](#)

Each FEMA IS Course offers a certificate for passing an exam. There are numerous courses available free to the public from FEMA. I have arranged many of the IS courses into groups within the Franklin County CERT Leadership Development Program. For now, familiarize yourself with the remaining content of this list before attempting any of these other courses.

## Citizens, Volunteers, and Risks

Every citizen and volunteer should understand the risks faced in Franklin County. Then, each citizen must prepare themselves and their families for each emergency or disaster based on the risk assessment.

### Ready.gov and the Current Risk Assessment

- Go to [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov) to be informed about the emergencies and disasters that may affect you. [The 2013 Risk Assessment for Franklin County](#) identifies the risks below in order of highest to lowest risk. Here are the ready.gov and other links related to the risks faced in Franklin County:
  1. [Tornadoes](#)
  2. [Dam Failure](#)
  3. [Flooding](#)
  4. [Weapons of Mass Destruction \(WMD\) Terrorist Incident](#)
  5. [Cyber-Terrorism](#)
  6. [Infectious Diseases](#)
  7. [Severe Winter Weather](#)
  8. [Hazardous Materials Incident](#)
  9. [Transportation Accident – Aircraft](#)
  10. [Severe Summer Weather](#)
  11. [Utility / Energy-Interruptions / Failures](#)
  12. Civil Disturbance
  13. [Lone-Wolf Terrorist Event](#)
  14. [Air / Water-Pollution / Contamination](#)
  15. [Extreme Heat](#)
  16. [Drought](#)
  17. [Invasive Species](#)
  18. [Earthquakes](#)

## **Ready.gov: Make a Plan, Build a Kit, Get Involved**

- Go to [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov) to [make a plan](#) now that you know the risks or continue to make or update your family plan.
- Go to [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov) to [build a kit](#). Acquire the immediate resources needed for at least the first 72 hours following an emergency or disaster faced based on the Franklin County Risks.
- Go to [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov) to [get involved](#). Congratulations! You are now at the starting line to become a volunteer.

## **Volunteering, Homeland Security, and Neighborhood Preparedness**

Homeland security begins at home. You and your family may not have all of the critical survival knowledge and/or the training needed!

Emergency management volunteers get their neighbors involved in community preparedness. The more resources and prepared neighbors within a community, the greater the chance is of everyone surviving an emergency or disaster. Don't forget to notify and involve your local public safety officials — such as your local police and/or your local fire department — in regards to your emergency planning intentions.

## How do I become an emergency management volunteer?

### FC CERT Basic Training

- The first step we recommend at FCEM&HS is to take the [FC CERT Basic Training](#). This training includes both classroom and hands-on activities and teaches basic survival skills for yourself, your family, and your neighborhood or workplace. The first 72 hours of any county-wide emergency or disaster is on you and those nearest to you. CERT Basic Training is exactly that: Basic Training. Don't currently have the time to spend taking the classroom FC CERT Training? Citizens can take the [on-line National CERT training](#). A test is given at the end of the training for a National CERT Certificate. This is great supplemental training, but it will not replace the FC CERT Basic Training.
- Continue community preparedness efforts by joining the [Siren Watch Team](#). Your community relies on their [outdoor warning siren\(s\)](#).

## Emergency Management Volunteer Specializations

- From here it is up to you. This is where volunteers can specialize in a specific area. Each volunteer is free to pick any number of specializations. Here are some of the specializations:
  - Work toward becoming an FC CERT Team Leader. Take the remaining FEMA IS courses. We have arranged the courses into FC CERT Leadership Development levels. Click [here](#) to see the course list. Then take the CERT [Tools for Leadership Success](#) course of the National CERT Supplemental Training offered on one of the first Saturdays of every month. Click [here](#) for the training schedule.
  - Take the National CERT Supplemental Training. Supplemental CERT Training occurs on the First Saturday of every month. An e-mail reminder is typically sent to remind everyone of the upcoming supplemental training. Click here for more information.
  - Become an [FC CERT Damage Assessment Specialist](#)
  - Become an [FC CERT Operation Flood Fight Specialist](#)
  - Become a [Wilmington NWS Weather Spotter Training](#) to become a [Skywarn Spotter](#). Then become a [Central Ohio Severe Weather Network](#) member.
  - Become an emergency communications volunteer. Get your [FCC amateur radio license](#). Join the [Central Ohio Amateur Radio Emergency Service](#) team.
  - Join the [Franklin County and Columbus Medical Reserve Corps](#). Medical and non-medical volunteers are needed.
  - Become a [Volunteer Reception Center Volunteer](#)
  - Click [here](#) for more volunteer opportunities

## **Ohio Responds**

Register with [Ohio Responds](#). Ohio Responds is the first line of activating multiple volunteers at once by phone or e-mail for a county-wide emergency or disaster. Ohio Responds is authorized under [ORC 5502.281](#).

### **Summary**

Keep up with your training and periodically review and update your plans. Emergencies and disasters can strike at any time.

Be Safe. Be ready!

The information presented is considered guidance only. Franklin County Emergency Management and Homeland Security, Its Director, staff, and volunteers are not responsible for any acts or omissions as a result of this document. This guide is considered a living document and can change without notice and should not replace common sense.