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The ND Citizen Corps Connection

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North Dakota hosts nation's first snowmobile CERT class

North Dakota has two things that can make snowmobiles an essential part of emergency management – lots of snow and long distances of wide-open prairie between places. This need became apparent during the spring of 2011 when a blizzard stranded motorists across the state – many of them in rural areas. Fortunately for these motorists the Roughrider Snowmobile Association, a group of snowmobile enthusiasts from the Bismarck area, was one group requested to assist emergency responders.



The snowmobile association had manpower, snowmobiles and, most importantly, a desire to help. While the snowmobile group has been a part of the county's resource directory for many years, what they didn't have was emergency management training. As the winter of 2011-2012 began, the group decided to seek out training to be better prepared to help out in future emergencies. This is where Burleigh County Emergency Management, the Burleigh County Sheriff's Department and CERT stepped in.

"After the snowmobile club's involvement during the blizzard last year, we approached them to see if they would be interested in some training," said Burleigh County Deputy Sheriff Tom Schroeder. "I had heard of CERT training from our emergency manager and the group decided that it would be the best option to fit their needs."

The snowmobile association began coordinating with the Burleigh County Citizen Corps Council led by Burleigh County Emergency Manager Mary Senger and soon started CERT classes. The classes were held during the group's regular twice-monthly meetings.

"We had 29 people who were very excited to take CERT training," said Schroeder. "As a sheriff's department, we were excited to gain a trained volunteer group who would have a better idea of what to do, and what not to do, in an emergency situation."

Because of the different needs of a snowmobile rider, modifications needed to be made to the basic CERT kits that are provided to participants in North Dakota. Instead of standard backpacks, the snowmobile association members were outfitted with special snowmobile backpacks. The backpacks sit higher on the back and have waist and chest straps to prevent them from falling off while riding. The backpacks contain basic first aid supplies, but also have extra heat packs, collapsible shovels, emergency blankets and ribbon tape for marking vehicles that have been searched.

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The Roughrider Snowmobile Association completed their CERT training on January 17 with a final exercise simulating a snowmobile accident. The group worked with the sheriff's department, rural fire department and ambulance service on the final exercise, during which they practiced triage, assessment, bandaging, splinting and carrying.

Now that the snowmobile association members have completed their training, the Burleigh County Sheriff's Department plans to put their newly trained volunteers to work.

"We have placed the CERT-trained members into the county's Reverse 911 system so that dispatch, emergency management or the sheriff's department can call them out when needed," Schroeder said. "We have also established protocols for marking vehicles, working within the ICS structure, working in teams and ensuring safety so that the department is more comfortable utilizing these volunteers.

In addition to response activities, the club is already planning to take CPR and First Aid training next fall. They are also working with the sheriff's department to create an informational brochure they can provide to stranded motorists with survival information for them to review until they are rescued. According to Schroeder, "It has been a lot of fun to see the excitement of the club members during the training. Our administration has been very supportive and is looking forward to working with this newly trained volunteer base."

CERT Training Comes in Handy

While CERT training is designed for large-scale events, there is no question that it can also be useful in everyday life. Richland County CERT member Rachel Roets put her CERT training to use at work last month. Her story is below.

On the evening of December 23 while I was working at Walmart, I watched a gentleman go into a seizure. I stared toward him, but before I could take a full step forward I could hear my CERT first aid instructor saying that I should not get too close because I could get hurt and become a patient myself. I stopped and assessed the situation. I immediately called for management to call 911, and that I needed them up front. A customer was also on the phone with 911.

At the same time a young woman was standing right by me hysterically screamed for someone to call 911 as she jumped up and down. I tried to calm her down by explaining that we were doing everything we could, but that did not work. Since she was not in any danger, I turned my attention back to the man who was now being held by his friend.

We saw that his head was bleeding, so the friend started to put pressure on the gash in his head while I got some towels for him to use to put the proper amount of pressure on the gash. At this point there were several other people who have had more training than I have taking care of the man having the seizure.

I then turned my attention back to the woman who was still freaking out, and started to calm her. A friend of the young woman came over and she also started to calm her down.

At this point we needed to have someone direct the police and EMT people to the actual spot in the store, so I went outside and waited for their arrival. When they arrived I took them to the spot by the most accessible route.

I thank the Lord for the CERT training I received. Prior to my CERT training, I would not have known how to correctly deal with the situation

Smartphone apps can help with preparedness

NDSU Extension Service

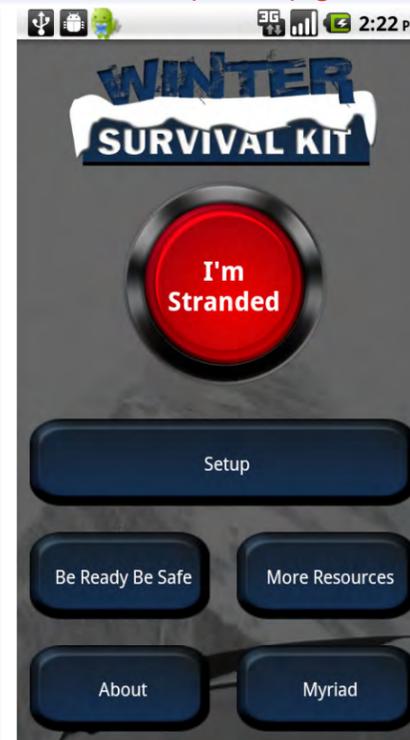
A new smartphone application from the North Dakota State University Extension Service will help motorists stuck in winter weather.

The Winter Survival Kit app can be as critical as a physical winter survival kit if you find yourself stuck or stranded in severe winter weather conditions, says Bob Bertsch, NDSU Agriculture Communication Web technology specialist. It's available free for both Android and iOS systems.

"Our app will help you find your current location, call 911, notify your friends and family, calculate

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how long you can run your engine to keep warm and stay safe from carbon monoxide poisoning," Bertsch said. "You can use the Winter Survival Kit app to store important phone and policy numbers for insurance or roadside assistance. You can also designate emergency contacts you want to alert when you become stranded."

If you become stranded, the Winter Survival Kit app will help you determine your geographic location and contact emergency services. The app's gas calculator will help you estimate how long you can run your engine on your remaining fuel.

The Winter Survival Kit app will alert you every 30 minutes to remind you to turn off your vehicle's engine periodically and check the exhaust pipe for snow buildup. These alerts are critical in helping you avoid deadly carbon monoxide poisoning, Bertsch says.

The Winter Survival Kit app also provides NDSU Extension Service information on how to put together a physical winter survival kit, prepare your vehicle for winter driving and stay safe when stranded in a storm or stuck in snow.

The app was developed by Myriad Devices, a company based in the NDSU Research and Technology Park incubator, which was founded by students and faculty in the NDSU Electrical and Computer Engineering Department and College of Business. The NDSU Extension Service

provided design and content input, and funded the project with a U.S. Department of Agriculture National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) Smith-Lever Special Needs grant.

This is the second smartphone app developed jointly by the NDSU Extension Service and Myriad Devices with NIFA support. The Disaster Recovery Journal app lets users record information about damages as they enter their flooded homes using text, images and audio, and provides Extension information on how to clean or deal with flood-damaged items.

Learn more about the apps at <http://www.ag.ndsu.edu/extension/apps>.

North Dakota's new CERT informational video available

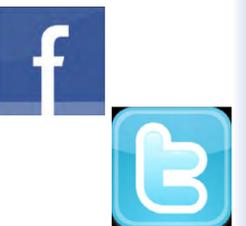
A new CERT informational video created through a grant from Kat Communications is now available. The video is approximately five minutes long and talks about the CERT and Teen CERT programs.

If you would like a free copy of the DVD to show to people or organizations in your area who may be interested in the program, email sarah@ndlc.org or call 800-472-2692 and ask for Sarah.



ND Citizen Corps has gone social

The ND Citizen Corps program has joined the social media craze with a Facebook and Twitter page of its own. Become a fan on Facebook by going to www.facebook.com/NDCERT or check out our Twitter page www.twitter.com/ndccp. Both pages are updated regularly with the latest information.



We Couldn't Succeed Without YOU!

Thanks for all you do! Please call me at 800-472-2692 or email me at sarah@ndlc.org with your questions.