



EL CERRITO-KENSINGTON FIRE DEPARTMENT

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DATE: January 25, 2024

TO: Kensington Emergency Preparedness Committee

FROM: Eric Saylor: Fire Chief

RE: **Goals for the KEPC**

Hello, members of the Kensington Emergency Preparedness Committee (KEPC). I apologize for missing the in-person meeting; I am teaching an Active Shooter Class for the Office of Emergency Services. Director Nagel asked me for a future direction for the KEPC.

I applaud the committee's efforts to protect the community. Concerning the members and the mission of the KEPC, the most effective future is to evolve into a formal Community Emergency Response Team (CERT). A formal CERT requires articles of incorporation, bylaws, and a board of directors.

- A formal CERT supports public safety service personnel as an additional resource in emergency and non-emergency events. CERT provide disaster training to citizens in the region.
- The Cert concept originated in Los Angeles in 1985 following several earthquakes. CERT aimed to develop a multi-functional volunteer response team that could provide basic fire suppression, light search and rescue, and first aid. Following 9/11, CERT became the foundation of nationwide citizen response groups with the goal to evolve into a fully integrated Fire Department volunteer force.
- A formal CERT team would give the KEPC a clear mission and allow it to receive funds, purchase equipment, and have members train with the fire department.

This is the natural progression of a committee addressing emergency preparedness into an organization actively preparing and training for an emergency. The El Cerrito/Kensington Fire Department will support a formal CERT organization and invite its members to our drills. The community will benefit from a professional fire department supported by well-trained citizens who can respond with us during disasters.

If the KEPC is interested in such an evolution, I can set up a presentation with a current, highly functioning CERT group to guide us through the process.

Thank you
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