



# Arizona Department of Homeland Security

## Press Release

Arizona Department of Homeland Security  
Public Information Office  
Amy M. Bolton, Public Affairs Officer  
Office: 602-542-1713 | Fax: 602-542-1729 | [www.azdohs.gov](http://www.azdohs.gov)

July 14, 2010  
Contact: Amy Bolton  
Direct: 602-542-1713

### **GOVERNOR BREWER OBSERVES CERT OPERATIONS DURING ARIZONA WILDFIRES**

On June 24, 2010, Arizona Governor Jan Brewer visited the Coconino County call center established in support of the Eagle Pass, Hardy and Schulz wildfires in northern Arizona. "Governor Brewer's visit demonstrates her strong support for the first responder community and the CERT programs across Arizona," said Assistant Director of the Arizona Department of Homeland Security, Cheryl Bowen. "The call center was one of many tasks carried out successfully by trained Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) volunteers in Coconino County, Arizona."

In total, Coconino County CERT volunteers gave 544 hours of community service in the call center. "We are proud of what we're doing up here with CERT," said Gerry Blair with the Coconino County Sheriff's Department. "We have over 45 active CERT volunteers who put in a tremendous amount of hours."

Northern Arizona was affected by three fires that struck within days of each other. CERT volunteers played a vital role in directing those affected by the fires as they volunteered staffing roadblocks from June 16 - 19 for areas that had been evacuated due to the Eagle Rock fire. In this role, CERT volunteers interacted with evacuated residents providing them comfort and information updates.

On Saturday June 19 while CERT volunteers were still assisting with the Eagle Rock Fire, they began to assist as the Hardy wild land fire began southwest of Flagstaff. This fire resulted in the evacuation of several neighborhoods. That same day, CERT volunteers sprang into action and quickly set up an information call center for the public. The following day, Sunday, June 20, the Schultz Fire was sparked north of Flagstaff.

-MORE-

## Press Release – Continued: Arizona Department of Homeland Security

The call center provided valuable information on both the Hardy and Schultz Fires and remained in operation between the dates of June 16 through June 25. As many as 10 CERT volunteers staffed the call center at any given time and answered more than 4,000 calls for information or assistance. CERT volunteers also assisted with the vital information flow to the Emergency Operation Center. Five neighborhoods located in Coconino County were evacuated as a result of the Schultz Fire. On the day residents were allowed to return to their homes, CERT Volunteers staffed 13 check points welcoming residents back to their homes and provided them with valuable re-entry information.

**About Citizen Corps:** Citizen Corps is comprised of teams of people helping to teach, train and encourage volunteerism within individual communities. There are five partner programs to Citizen Corps: Medical Reserve Corps, Fire Corps, Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT), USA on Watch and Volunteers in Police Service. Citizen Corps programs build on the successful efforts that are in place in many communities around the country to prevent crime and respond to emergencies. Programs that started through local innovation are the foundation for Citizen Corps and this national approach to citizen participation in community safety.

**About CERT:** CERT provides one of many opportunities for citizens to become an integral part of protecting the homeland and supporting local first responders. CERT involves people helping people and is a positive and realistic approach to emergency and disaster situations. Through training, CERT members prepare to help people, their families and their neighbors in the event of a disaster in their community. Citizens also learn about disaster preparedness and receive training in basic disaster response skills such as fire safety, light search and rescue, and disaster medical operations. CERT volunteers support the community year-round by participating in community preparedness outreach activities and distributing materials on disaster preparedness and education.

To find or register a CERT program in your area, visit: <http://www.citizencorps.gov/cert/index.shtm>

### Resources:

National: <http://www.citizencorps.gov/index.shtm>, <http://www.citizencorps.gov/cert/index.shtm>

State: <http://www.azdohs.gov/ASCCC/>

County: <http://www.coconino.az.gov/emergencysvcs.aspx?id=598>

###