



City of Malibu News

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Malibu CERT Team Receives Award from the California Emergency Services Association for Contributions to Malibu's Emergency Preparedness

(Malibu, CA) – The Malibu Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) has been selected to receive the California Emergency Services Association – Southern Chapter (CESA-SC) Certificate of Recognition for its many achievements towards community-wide emergency preparedness in Malibu.

“Studies of past disaster have shown the majority of rescues in the immediate aftermath were done by community members, because they are on-site when the disaster struck,” said Mayor Bruce Silverstein. “The Malibu CERT Team is a great example of how a City government can partner with community volunteers to greatly increase the community’s resilience during a wildfire, earthquake or other disaster, and I applaud the Malibu CERT Team for their valuable contributions.”

The award recognizes an individual, agency, or organization that has earned the respect and esteem from the emergency management community for a executing projects that benefit public safety. The nomination was submitted by the City’s Public Safety Department to formally recognize the Malibu CERT Team for their numerous contributions to disaster preparedness in Malibu.

During the 2018 Woolsey Fire, the telecommunications infrastructure system in the City of Malibu was damaged and inoperable leaving most people and responders who were in the City with little to no means to send or receive calls, texts, or emergency information. The CERT Team joined with the City’s efforts to make improvements in radio, satellite, and back-up power capabilities to enable emergency communications during future disasters.

The CERT Team’s first project was establishing a radio communication program for CERT Team members and City staff. They researched and tested various types of radio equipment to identify the best option and installed a repeater at the Castro Peak radio communication site to compliment the Point Dume repeater site for better radio coverage. They conducted radio training for all team members and key staff, conducted numerous exercises and drills, and continue to hold weekly radio check-ins with CERT Team members and other key public safety volunteers and partners.

Their next project was establishing satellite phone and internet capabilities on each of the City’s six emergency bins, which the CERT Team maintain, and which are designed to serve as Points of Distribution and Emergency Information Stations during disasters.

In June 2022, at the recommendation of the CERT Team Leader, the City purchased three satellite dishes and three voice-over-internet-protocol (VOIP) telephone lines. One dish system is now located at the Zuma Beach bin, one dish system is located at the City Hall bin, and the third is being kept in reserve as a mobile unit. Residents who come to the emergency bin for supplies or information will be able to connect to the internet over a Wi-Fi hotspot or use the VOIP phone line for emergency phone calls. This also ensures that if an emergency arises at the bin, the CERT Team can call 9-1-1 for help if other networks are down.

Lastly, the CERT Team has worked to ensure that all City-owned emergency bins have power during an extended event such as an earthquake or wildfire. Each bin now has, or will soon have, solar panels and a battery storage system that can power the new satellite system, the City's two-way radio and other communications equipment, laptops and printers and other smaller equipment such as USB charging stations and LED lighting.

City staff joined members of the CERT Team at an awards ceremony on Tuesday, March 28, 2023, in Diamond Bar, California.

CESA is a non-profit organization that promotes mutual support and cooperation across disciplines in preparing for disasters. Its mission is to support and coordinate the efforts of its member emergency managers concerning Federal, State and local emergency management policies; improve the professional status of its members; and present legislative and regulatory matters to its members. Learn more at <https://www.cesa.net>.

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