

CERT SIZE-UP

Size-up is a continual process that enables professional responders to make decisions and respond appropriately in the areas of greatest need. CERT size-up consists of 9 steps and should be used in any emergency situation.

The 9 steps of CERT size-up are:

1. Gather facts. What has happened? How many people appear to be involved? What is the current situation? Are there hazards? Poor weather? What time of day is it?
2. Assess and communicate the damage. Try to determine what has happened, what is happening now, and how bad things can really get. Is it beyond the capabilities of CERT?
3. Consider probabilities. What is likely to happen? What could happen through cascading events? Is there a potential for more disaster activity?
4. Assess your own situation. Are you in immediate danger? Have you been trained to handle the situation? Do you have the equipment / resources that you need?
5. Establish priorities. Are lives at risk? Can you help? Remember, life safety is the first priority! Are there more pressing needs at the moment? What should be done and in what order?
6. Make decisions. Base your decisions on the answers to Steps 1 through 5 and in accordance with the priorities that you established. Base decisions on a) the safety of CERT members, b) safety of victims and others, c) protection of the environment and then finally d) protection of property.
7. Develop a plan of action. Develop a plan that will help you accomplish your priorities. Simple plans may be verbal, but more complex plans should always be written (then provide that documentation to responding agencies when they arrive).
8. Take action. Execute your plan, documenting deviations and status changes so that you can report the situation accurately to first responders.
9. Evaluate progress. At intervals, evaluate your progress in accomplishing the objectives in the plan of action to determine what is working and what changes you may have to make to stabilize the situation. Continually size-up to ensure safety.