



NERT Four Pillars

Neighborhood – Emergency – Response – Team

The San Francisco Neighborhood Emergency Response Team (NERT) Mission:

Beginning with ourselves, we will be prepared to work as individuals or together in emergency response teams, to assist our families and neighbors in time of disaster, and to make decisions that do the Most Good for the Most People.

NERT's effectiveness in carrying out this mission depends on four pillars that ensure the program's success:

1. Serving the City's Neighborhoods

- **Neighborhood Focus.** Neighbors and neighborhoods are key elements in disaster preparedness, training, and operations in the NERT program. NERT attracts and retains volunteers in part because teams organize themselves as *neighborhood*-based communities.
- **Force Multiplier.** During disasters, NERT volunteers become first responders in their neighborhoods, and act as "eyes and ears" for the San Francisco Fire Department (SFFD) by reporting conditions around the city. NERT further assists the SFFD by doing light search and rescue, medical triage, and utility shut-off in affected neighborhoods. The presence of NERT allows professional first responders to focus on areas that are most heavily impacted, providing a unique service to our City in a time of great need.

2. Effective, Engaged Emergency Volunteers

- **Culture of Personal Preparedness.** NERT actively fosters personal preparedness in a way that *no other City program* does: through hands-on training. Personal preparedness is the first and most important goal of NERT. Each person and family that can care for itself after a disaster is one less that will need professional assistance. Such broad personal preparedness enables San Francisco to recover more quickly after a disaster. Through NERT, members are able to give back to the City, while helping family, friends, and neighbors.
- **Effective Training/Ability to Serve.** The SFFD provides volunteers with basic and advanced disaster-response training, and reinforces these skills through citywide and smaller drills. Training is provided by professional first responders from the SFFD who, on a daily basis, perform the tasks that they train NERT volunteers to perform.
- **Operational Readiness.** NERT is a volunteer program that must become operational at a moment's notice. Therefore, NERT's ongoing relationship with an operational organization such as the SFFD is essential.

3. Outstanding Response Infrastructure

- **Trained and Supported by the SFFD.** From NERT's inception in 1990 to the present, the SFFD has provided and continues to provide outstanding support, training, and resources



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to the NERT program, ensuring NERT's growth into a nationally-recognized volunteer disaster response group. NERT's association with the SFFD allows volunteers to remain safe and effective in their disaster response efforts. SFFD instructors provide training, mentoring, and support to NERT members long after basic training ends.

- **Dedicated Program Coordinator.** NERT has flourished under the leadership of a dedicated Program Coordinator, who provides oversight, direction, and leadership to the program. The Program Coordinator also acts as NERT's spokesperson and liaison to other city agencies and preparedness organizations.
- **Funding Commensurate with the Mission and the Need.** NERT benefits from reliable, consistent, and adequate funding for instruction, outreach, and program management. In turn, NERT provides great benefits to the City at minimal cost: Each year, NERT provides disaster preparedness training to approximately 2,000 people who live or work in San Francisco, at a cost of less than \$7 per person -- an unsurpassed value for our City.

4. Healthy Collaboration, Healthy Teams

- **Support of City Leaders.** NERT's effectiveness hinges on healthy support from, and collaboration with, a number of other city entities that are central to disaster preparedness, response, and recovery. These include the San Francisco Fire Commission, the Department of Emergency Management, the Board of Supervisors, and the Office of the Mayor.
- **Partnership with Other Volunteer Organizations.** NERT is strengthened by its involvement and work with other volunteer-based organizations in the San Francisco Bay Area, including the Auxiliary Communications Service, the California Disaster Corps, other CERT organizations, the American Red Cross Bay Area Chapter, and San Francisco SAFE.

The NERT program continually works to anticipate and to respond to the effects of an area-wide disaster. These four pillars ensure NERT's strength in fulfilling our mission to do the most good for the most people.

Thank you for your support!

The NERT Advisory Board 2011

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