



# Keeping Your CERT Team Energized



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# **Presentation Overview**



- 1. Overview of Wilton CERT**
- 2. Clearly define your CERT Team's mission parameters (what services you will provide)**
- 3. Provide regular training in those areas**
- 4. Ensure that you have the appropriate equipment and PPE to deliver those services**
- 5. Market the Team's skills so that callouts/ activations take place**





# What is Wilton CERT?



- Formed as a team in 2004
- 100+ Members, >60 active
- 20+ activations per year
- Average of 13+ members per call-out (same or higher during the work day)
- Recognized as one of the top CT CERT teams
- Regular Train - Local, regional and state level
- Funded through Town/FD budget, plus private donations and state grants





# What Do They Do?



## ■ Provide Support to Emergency Services:

- Scene security – Incidents and wires down
- Traffic control – Road closures
- Pedestrian/crowd control – Town events
- Emergency sheltering
- Missing person search
- EOC Support
- Emergency water and food distribution







# What Do They Do?



## ■ Provide Support to Emergency Services (continued):

- Accountability/credentialing
- Deploy specialized equipment
  - Emergency traffic signage
  - VMS signs
  - Light towers
  - Scene lighting
- Damage assessment
- Mutual Aid assistance to Bridgeport, Westport and New Canaan Teams

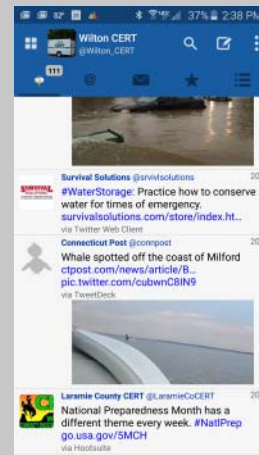




# Social Media & EOC Support



- CERT members maintain the Social Media accounts for *Wilton CERT* and *Wilton Emergency Management*
- Emergency and Community Preparedness



**Scribe, WebEOC and social media monitoring/posting at EOC**





# Wilton CERT Resources



- 2 Shelter Trailers
- 1 CERT Trailer
- Light Towers
- Variable Message Signs
- Three pop-up tents







# Wilton CERT Resources



- Use of Town vehicles, when available (magnetic signs)



- Fire Department
- Police Department
- Potential use of vehicles from health and other departments





# Wilton CERT Resources



## ➤ Response Vehicle

- Part of long term plan
- Purchased in 2014
- Paid for with Town funds (2/3) and donations (1/3)
- Major impact on morale and Team member commitment





# Keeping Them Energized



- **Common problem – Team members seem to lose interest**
- What do we mean by “Energized”?
  - Equates primarily to “attraction and retention of members”
  - Key to each facet of unit success is essentially and primarily dependent on ***frequent, responsible and valued activity***
  - Everything that follows is what produces that result
- It is possible, but it takes some work



# Ideas & Best Practices



## ➤ Need support from the town leadership

- Provide opportunity to build & display their skills and competence levels
- Having the right town liaison to CERT is key to the success of the team
- Include CERT representatives in planning meetings and make them feel part of the emergency services team
- Must have adequate, but not significant amounts of funding





# Ideas & Best Practices



- Earned recognition and respect
  - Town Leaders
  - All First Responders
  - The general public
  - The media
- Numerous examples of each impacting favorably on Wilton CERT
- Need a multi-year plan, with milestones



# Ideas & Best Practices



## ➤ Activity, Callouts & Activations

- Training and sheltering alone will not be enough to keep the Team members motivated and engaged
  - Start by using the Team in low hazard situations (i.e., large public events assisting other Public Safety agencies)
  - Will promote team organizational and skill building
- Cross train with other cert units, learn best practices
- Use a activation/notification system (i.e., Yahoo Groups, CodeRed, etc.)



# Ideas & Best Practices



## ➤ The Team needs a strong leader & organizational structure

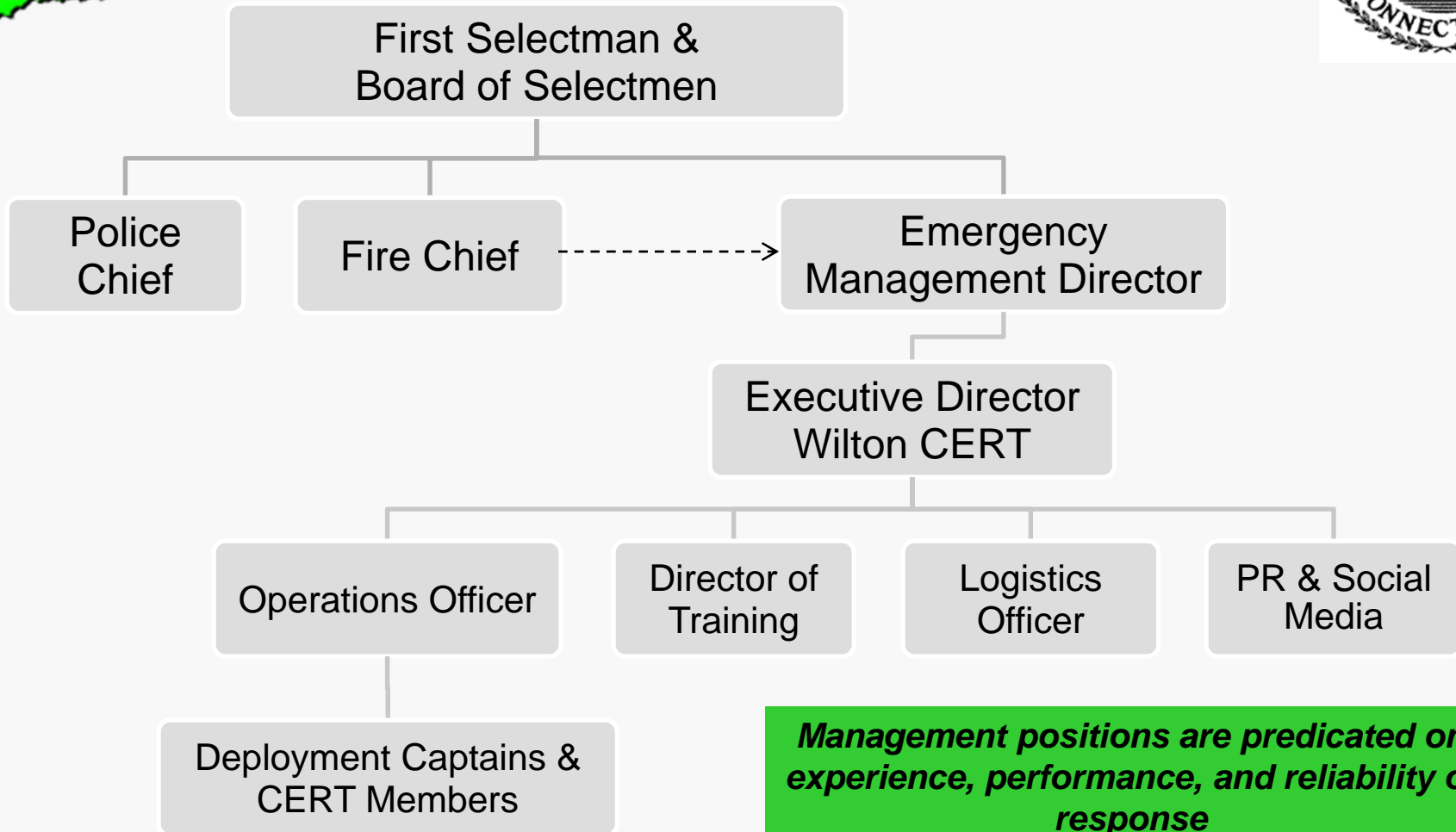
- Key areas include Operations, Administration, Tactical Communications, Social Media/Public Relations, Logistics, etc.
- Leadership must identify each member's areas of interest and qualifications, then train/delegate related duties accordingly







# Wilton CERT Organization





# Ideas & Best Practices



## ➤ Operations Officer

- Effectively communicate with field and command level emergency responders
- Understand incident objectives and deploy assets & Team members in accordance with the IAP
  - “Without Operations Officer TG Rawlins, Wilton CERT would be nothing”
  - “Attendees at the CCM Conference deserve to hear his name and learn of his extraordinary contributions to any success we enjoy”

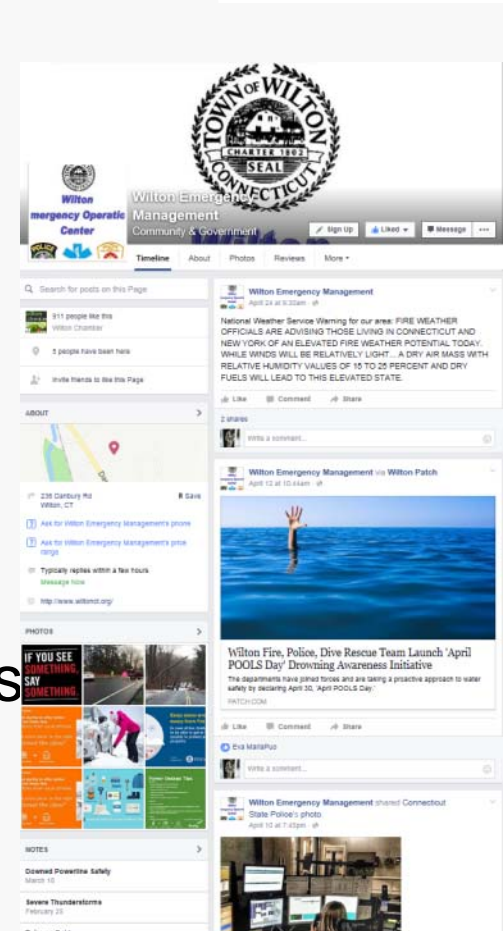


# Ideas & Best Practices



## ➤ Marketing & Public Relations

- Be sure that you put the right person in charge of this critical area
- Become best friends with the local newspaper editor (needs free advertising)
- Social Media –
  - Frequent and relevant postings are essential, especially during emergencies
  - Monitor postings by public to help refine your social media messages and content







# Ideas & Best Practices



## ➤ Visible proof of recognition and reward

- **Stuff** – The trailer, response truck, equipment, etc.
- **Recognition** – Recognize Team as often as possible for their commitment and actions
- **Space** – A place for the Team to meet at least monthly (community center room, FD/PD training room, etc.)
- **CERT Clothing & Apparel** – Prompts conversation while out in the public

*These tell our members they are noticed and valued & that Wilton CERT is a organization with which people will wish to be affiliated*





# Sometimes You Get Lucky





# Summary



1. **Define** – Clearly define your CERT Team's mission parameters (services you will provide)
2. **Training** – Provided regularly in mission areas
3. **Equip** – Ensure that you have the appropriate equipment and PPE to deliver those services
4. **Plan** – short & long term
5. **Market** Team qualifications & skills
  - a. Improves recognition & respect
  - b. Ensures that callouts/activations take place

