



# CITY OF HUNTINGTON BEACH CERT NEWSLETTER

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### Drive-Through Resource Fair, Friday, Oct 16, 2020 1 – 4 PM

By Phil Burtis



We know many of you wonderful CERT volunteers either use or even volunteer at the Senior Center in Central Park. Due to the pandemic, the annual Huntington Beach Council on Aging (HBCOA) "Senior Saturday" was cancelled, like everything else. So the HBCOA is sponsoring a senior drive-through resource fair!

There will be lots of vendors handing out information relative to the people who frequent the center. Attendees will drive through the parking lot and be handed information from each pop up in line!

CERT, along with FireMed, will have a booth to hand out information related to HBFD and disaster preparation. Come by! See flyer on page 6.

### Huntington Beach Fire Outreach Foundation (HBFOF) By Phil Burtis



The Huntington Beach Fire Outreach Foundation (HBFOF) was founded in 2019 with a mission to promote fire safety and emergency preparedness through community outreach programs. The vision is to support all the HBFD volunteers and first responders. That includes CERT, RACES, SHIP and more.

You may recall there was a big fire at the Bolsa Chica wetlands that threatened homes in what is known as the Brightwater Community. The residents of Brightwater wanted to thank and help the firefighters that saved their homes. They raised \$4,000 which they wanted to donate somehow to the first responders.

The HBFOF is proud to have been selected by Brightwater to be the recipient of these funds and they worked with Huntington Beach Fire Department to identify any immediate needs. As a result, HBFOF purchased 40 particulate hoods used by firefighters to help stop heat and smoke inhalation. This purchase will allow everyone to have two hoods instead of one which will really help in rotation during a large event.

The HBFOF website at: <https://www.hbfof.org> reflects the Brightwater donation. Should you have any questions, email the HBFOF at [hbfofinfo@gmail.com](mailto:hbfofinfo@gmail.com).

### CERT Mask Booths July 25–Sept. 27, 2020 By Carol Burtis

Since the end of July CERT volunteers have been staffing free mask distribution booths downtown. While we realize there are many who do not wish to wear a mask, many do, and they have really appreciated our handing out masks on the weekends. To date, we have distributed over 6000!! Downtown businesses have appreciated our help too because they all require people be wearing masks to enter, so when someone wishes to purchase something, they end up coming to our booth to get a mask!

We have had 26 CERT volunteers donate 84 hours helping with the booth. Our Fire Chief, City Council and City Manager are so pleased with what we are doing they have extended having the booth through the end of October. A BIG thank you to all of our volunteers who have helped with these booths!!

### An Opportunity to use my CERT Training By Priscilla Atkinson, Proud CERT Member!

Early on a Friday morning walk in my mobile home park, a neighbor ran to me saying, "There is a man in the road asking for help". I ran only a few homes away to find an elderly man had fallen. I introduced myself and told him I was a member of CERT and would help him. He told me he had fallen and was in pain.

I made him comfortable and proceeded to evaluate him. He had no head injury and, although agitated, was breathing normally. There was a small abrasion to his knee, with only a minute amount of bleeding. On checking his arms and shoulders I noticed he had what appeared to be a shoulder dislocation. I then put his arm against his chest and advised him not to move it. I offered to call 911 to request a paramedic and ambulance, but he refused and asked me to call his son.

(continued on page 2)

## An Opportunity to use my CERT Training (continued from page 1)

I carefully helped him into his home, made him comfortable on his recliner and searched to find a piece of material to immobilize his arm and shoulder. I found a large towel and was able to attach a sling and put a pillow under his arm to limit any movement. I then sanitized the abrasion on his knee. He was comfortable, so I called his son and he spoke with him. His son was 45 minutes away but said he would come. He told his dad "no 911 call".

After waiting about an hour, and the son had not arrived yet, the pain had gotten worse. I asked his permission to call the paramedics so he could get treated and he agreed. I then called 911 and the paramedics and ambulance came immediately.

After assessing the patient's condition, he was given pain medication and prepared to go to the hospital. The paramedic asked who had given all the care he received, I told him I had. He then said, "Good job, you did everything right"! My response to that was "I am a member of your Huntington Beach CERT program and this was part of my training".

I was so thankful to have been at the right place at the right time and to be able to assist when needed. By the way, my patient is 102 years old! One never knows what incidents might be encountered. Being first aid trained through the CERT program allows us to confidently help someone after an accident, fall, or many other conditions.

He was returned home later that evening and is doing well.

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### The National CERT Association

*By Phil Burtis*



The National CERT Association (NCA) was formed in late 2019 with a mission to promote resiliency through preparedness, response and recovery by sharing resources to empower trained volunteers in our communities <https://nationalcert.org>.

Working in concert with FEMA, the NCA leverages the strength and experience of CERT programs nationwide to share guidance and best practices as well as build more robust communication channels so that CERT programs can connect with each other more efficiently.

One exciting development is that along with the Governor's Office of Emergency Services (CAL OES),

the NCA is working on a "hybrid" CERT training program whereby much of the traditional CERT PowerPoint talks will be available online. After completion of the online portion, the attendee will register with their local CERT program to finish the hands-on portion. You are only CERT qualified if you pass all online units with a score of 70% or better and then also successfully complete the hands-on assessment.

This offers several advantages in terms of student-driven learning: the ability to make up something you missed and the option to go over a given unit more than once if you desire. It would also better standardize training across the country. The disadvantage of the online approach is that, with a "pre-canned" video training module, there is no interaction with a live instructor. You watch it, take the quiz and go on. However, you'd have the option to ask questions when you go to the hands-on session.

Another interesting thing is that the NCA has partnered with a company called Merit <https://www.merits.com/why-merit>. This company offers a technology platform whereby an issuer (like NCA) can create a digital certificate, called a 'merit', that they can send to a recipient (like you!). As you complete each online unit in "hybrid" CERT, you get a merit. As in scouting, you get a digital version of a 'merit badge' for mastering a skill. And if you pass all units, you get a full course completion merit as well.

They have an app for a smartphone that shows your merits. When you went to a CERT hands-on class provider, you would show them your completion merit as proof you completed the online portion of the training.

We have created a merit for a couple of events to see how it works. If you participated in either the mask distribution booths or the material handout event, you should have received an email from merits.com. You can view your merits by logging in on their website or installing the app.

We are currently evaluating whether "hybrid" CERT will be a good option for Huntington Beach CERT or not. Certainly, in these pandemic times, the ability to take much of the CERT class online in your home is valuable. Figuring out how follow up with the hands-on part and integrate the Huntington Beach specifics is currently being discussed.

As the "hybrid" CERT training program gets finalized and available, we will let everyone know. It could be a great refresher for existing members. The 3-D virtual reality damage assessment portion looks really fantastic! So stay tuned for future information!

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## Wildfire Smoke Hazards from the CDC <https://www.cdc.gov/disasters/wildfires/smoke.html>

Wildfire smoke can harm you in multiple ways. Smoke can hurt your eyes, irritate your respiratory system, and worsen chronic heart and lung diseases. This fact sheet tells you how you can protect your health and be safe if you are exposed to wildfire smoke.



### What is Wildfire Smoke and Can it Make Me Sick?

Wildfire smoke is a mix of gases and fine particles from burning vegetation, building materials, and other materials. Wildfire smoke can make anyone sick. Even someone who is healthy can get sick if there is enough smoke in the air. Breathing in smoke can have immediate health effects, including:

- Coughing
- Trouble breathing normally
- Stinging eyes
- A scratchy throat
- Runny nose
- Irritated sinuses
- Wheezing and shortness of breath
- Chest pain
- Headaches
- An asthma attack
- Tiredness
- Fast heartbeat

Older adults, pregnant women, children, and people with preexisting respiratory and heart conditions may be more likely to get sick if they breathe in wildfire smoke.

### Wildfire Smoke Can Affect High Risk Groups

#### Eight Tips for Protecting Yourself from Breathing Wildfire Smoke

If possible, limit your exposure to smoke. Here are eight tips to help you protect your health:

1. **Pay attention to local air quality reports and the [US Air Quality Index](#)**. When a wildfire occurs in your area, watch for news or health warnings about smoke. Pay attention to public health messages and take extra safety measures such as avoiding spending time outdoors.
2. **Pay attention to visibility guides if they are available.** Although not every community measures the amount of particles in the air, some communities in the western United States have

guidelines to help people estimate air quality based on how far they can see.

3. **If you are told to stay indoors, stay indoors and keep your indoor air as clean as possible.** Keep windows and doors closed unless it is very hot outside. Run an air conditioner if you have one, but keep the fresh-air intake closed and the filter clean to prevent outdoor smoke from getting inside. Seek shelter elsewhere if you do not have an air conditioner and it is too warm to stay inside with the windows closed.
4. **Use an air filter.** Use a freestanding indoor air filter with particle removal to help protect people with heart disease, asthma or other respiratory conditions and the elderly and children from the effects of wildfire smoke. Follow the manufacturer's instructions on filter replacement and where to place the device.
5. **Do not add to indoor pollution.** When smoke levels are high, do not use anything that burns, such as candles and fireplaces. Do not vacuum, because vacuuming stirs up particles already inside your home. Do not smoke tobacco or other products, because smoking puts even more pollution into the air.
6. **Follow your doctor's advice about medicines and about your respiratory management plan if you have asthma or another lung disease or cardiovascular disease.** Call your doctor if your symptoms worsen.
7. **Do not rely on dust masks for protection.** Paper "comfort" or "dust" masks commonly found at hardware stores trap large particles, such as sawdust. These masks will not protect your lungs from smoke. An "N95" mask, properly worn, will offer some protection. If you decide to keep a mask on hand, see the [Respirator Fact Sheet](#) provided by CDC's National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health.
8. **Avoid smoke exposure during outdoor recreation.** Wildfires and prescribed burns—fires that are set on purpose to manage land—can create smoky conditions. Before you travel to a park or forest, check to see if any wildfires are happening or if any prescribed burns are planned.



## **A Tale of Hurricane Survival**

*By Virginia Petrelis*

My cousin, Greg Dahlman, and his family live in Leesville, Louisiana, about 120 miles from the Gulf of Mexico. As our family, scattered from Ohio, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Nevada and California watched, Hurricane Laura, a Category 4 storm, made landfall at Cameron, Louisiana and headed straight toward Leesville. We searched the news and internet looking for news of Louisiana. We saw a young girl in Leesville had been killed when a tree fell on her family home.

Luckily, I found Greg's daughter's Facebook post saying, *"Lost power at 2:50 am. So dark out that you can't see anything. There is not even any lightning which would normally help. All I hear is large gusts of wind about every 5 minutes."* We knew they had survived. They lost cell service, but not completely; they were still able to text. Over the next several days, Greg texted the family with updates.

Because emergency preparedness is the same no matter if it's an earthquake, tornado or hurricane, I asked Greg to share his preparations and experience with us. See his article below.

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## **Preparing for the Hurricane**

*By Greg Dahlman*

Living in West Central Louisiana, I have experienced the devastation from two hurricanes that made their path through our area. In 2005 Hurricane Rita came through after being downgraded to a tropical storm. Although we were without electrical power for nine days, I don't remember the winds being so strong this far inland.

On August 27, we really weren't too concerned about the approaching Hurricane Laura, but our daughter, Terri, with her two boys came to spend the night, thinking they'd be safer in our brick home than in their mobile home. We expected Laura to be about the same as Rita. Were we in for a surprise!

We had settled in for the night. Laura came roaring through as a category two hurricane. About 3 am we lost power and everything went completely black. I had flashlights ready. We tried to sleep but the howling wind and small branches bouncing off the windows and the sound of shingles being torn off the roof kept us awake. I believe in God and the power of prayer. As I lay in bed, I did a LOT of praying that our family and home would be spared. Every once in awhile, I'd shine a flashlight out the door to see if our big oak tree was still standing. I'd never seen limbs being whipped around like that. I worried that would be the tree to fall on our house.

Around 5 am it seemed the worst was over. I believe it was the eye of the hurricane passing through. I was about to fall asleep when the wind picked up again, only this time it changed direction. I heard a large thud and wondered what it was. At daybreak I saw it was a large pine tree lying on its side, just off our property. Several trees were down in our yard, but my big oak tree still stood strong. I felt blessed that our house had survived with very little roof damage. Luckily, I had saved some of the original shingles just in case I needed them for a hurricane or tornado. However, we were without power for 13 days.

There are a few things I believe to be necessary to help get through several days of disaster. Obviously, you need shelter, water, food, and clothing. Not so obvious is a power source.

If you are lucky enough to have shelter, you will most likely need a generator. This is the one item I would not want to be without. I am no expert on generators; I know they come in various sizes. Mine is 5500 watts and it has enough power to run two refrigerators, two small window air conditioners, one upright freezer, a couple light fixtures, a phone charger, big screen TV and my computer. I did not attempt to connect anything that required a 220V connection such as the electric water heater, clothes dryer or central air conditioner.

I do not know what would have happened if I overloaded it. It ran almost nonstop for 13 days. I stopped it whenever I added fuel. (Huge safety factor – never add fuel with the motor running.) And I stopped it whenever I changed oil – recommended every 50 hours. Having a generator to run a refrigerator and freezer is a lifesaver for much needed food. I am sure a smaller generator would be sufficient for just those two items.

I have four 5-gallon gas cans that I keep full for emergencies. Gasoline is in large demand and short supply when disaster strikes. Our small hometown had the electricity knocked out. No gas for a couple days. When Walmart opened their pumps, gas lines were LONG!

I traveled to Alexandria our next closest big city, 40 miles away, and still waited in line for an hour for gas at Sam's Club. One third of the city's power was out. People were not just getting gas for generators; they needed gas to get to designated shelters; many people fleeing the coast, not knowing for certain where they needed to go.

Because of the hot humid weather after the storm, our generator needed about 10 gallons of gas a day to keep the air conditioners and everything else running. I went to Alexandria every few days for gas and groceries. As electric power was restored and people headed back to their homes, the lines at the pumps weren't very bad.

## Preparing for the Hurricane (continued from page 4)

We found the small window air conditioners were not adequate to keep the house cool enough to sleep at night. No air conditioners were available in nearby towns so I drove to Tyler, Texas, almost 200 miles away to buy one.

So, storage of gas for emergency is a good idea. How long can you store gas? I have heard differing opinions. In my experience, I have stored gas in plastic gas specific containers for a year with no problem. I would recommend a fuel additive if storage is longer than a year. I keep gas fresh by using it for mowing the lawn. When I empty one container, I refill it and start using another. Don't forget to have some oil stored for the generator too.

Heavy duty extension cords are also a necessity. I had five 100' cords strung out throughout the house. And I used multiple plug surge protectors and/or adaptors.

I stocked up on canned items – mostly soups. I purchased items that I could heat up easily on my camp stove. I also had a single burner that mounted directly on top of a propane canister. I have seen them at Academy Sports Stores and in sporting goods departments at Walmart and Target. It was excellent for heating single cans of soup and it heated up fast. Even on the lowest flame setting, I had to be careful not to burn the food. I also used it for heating water that I needed for washing dishes. (Throwaway paper plates would probably be a good idea but I didn't use any.)

If you are not stocked up, don't expect to find many items at the grocery store. Many shelves were empty. Bread was especially scarce. I ate hot dogs (easy to cook) without buns. My propane BBQ grill came in handy, too.

What about water? Our city water system has backup generators and they failed at first. I went without water for only one day. Luckily, I had filled some 20-gallon containers with collected rainwater. A good idea is to fill a bathtub and sinks with water if you know in advance of coming disaster. I save plastic gallon milk jugs just for such reason. (What was I thinking; I didn't fill any before hurricane Laura hit!) Luckily, our city water backup generators began working and supplied us with water. FEMA was available with bottled water, but I didn't require any. I had plenty stockpiled. Most people don't think about it, but you will need water for flushing commodes. The more water you can collect ahead of time, the better.

Since we had a water supply and a generator, I was able to wash a load of clothes a couple of times. I would unplug the freezer long enough to plug in the washer. And I put up a temporary clothesline and put the sunshine to work drying the clothes. Yes, they still make

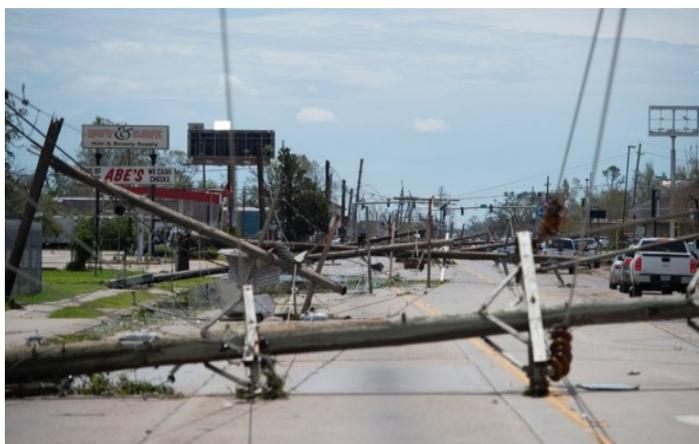
clothes pins! I also found out the plastic clothes hangers with the clips for hanging up pants work well, too.

Another thing that I recommend, and most people don't think about, is having enough prescription medications. Between my wife and I we take enough medications that we could open our own pharmacy. I was lucky I had our prescriptions filled before Hurricane Laura. It would have been difficult to get prescriptions filled after disaster hit. Our local pharmacy was closed until electricity was restored. And lines were long where pharmacies were open.

One last thing, and probably most important is to check on your neighbors, especially the elderly. Help each other. You can get more done working as a team than you can by yourself.

I want to thank everyone who came to Louisiana to help clean up our state after Hurricane Laura. I saw roads that were impassable due to downed trees. I heard electric companies from 17 different states were here. I personally witnessed crews traveling the highways replacing poles, removing trees off downed power lines and restringing miles of lines. One lineman was electrocuted and I heard he survived. I have never seen such widespread destruction and such quick response from outside power crews.

I saw damage from Jasper, Texas all the way to Marksville, Louisiana – halfway across the state. I don't know how far north it went. I heard there was damage all the way into Arkansas. Thanks to everyone for your expert help.



You can prepare for disaster, but you never know how well you are prepared until disaster hits. It's heartwarming to know that there are people who come together when help is needed. It seems to be a natural thing for people to do.

**THE HUNTINGTON BEACH COUNCIL  
ON AGING PRESENTS:**

***DRIVE-THROUGH  
RESOURCE FAIR***

**FREE**

**SENIOR CENTER IN  
CENTRAL PARK**

**FRIDAY, OCTOBER 16TH 1-4pm**

**VISIT A WIDE VARIETY OF LOCAL VENDORS**

**TAKE HOME PRE-MADE PACKAGES OF RESOURCE  
INFORMATION**

**FOR QUESTIONS OR LIST OF VENDORS CONTACT:  
714-536-5600**



# PRE-EVACUATION PREPARATION STEPS

When an evacuation is anticipated, follow these checklists (if time allows) to give your home the best chance of surviving a wildfire:

## OUTSIDE

- 1 Gather up flammable items from the exterior of the house and bring them inside (patio furniture, children's toys, door mats, trash cans, etc.) or place them in your pool.
- 2 Turn off propane tanks.
- 3 Move propane BBQ appliances away from structures.
- 4 Connect garden hoses to outside water valves or spigots for use by firefighters. Fill water buckets and place them around the house.
- 5 Don't leave sprinklers on or water running; they can affect critical water pressure.
- 6 Leave exterior lights on so your home is visible to firefighters in the smoke or darkness of night.
- 7 Put your Emergency Supply Kit in your vehicle.
- 8 Back your car into the driveway with vehicle loaded and all doors and windows closed. Carry your car keys with you.
- 9 Have a ladder available and place it at the corner of the house for firefighters to quickly access your roof.
- 10 Seal attic and ground vents with pre-cut plywood or commercial seals.
- 11 Monitor your property and the fire situation. Don't wait for an evacuation order if you feel threatened and need to leave.
- 12 Check on neighbors and make sure they are preparing to leave.

## INSIDE THE HOUSE

- 13 Shut all windows and doors, leaving them unlocked.
- 14 Remove flammable window shades and curtains. Close metal shutters.
- 15 Move flammable furniture to the center of the room, away from windows and doors.
- 16 Shut off gas at the meter. Turn off pilot lights.
- 17 Leave your lights on so firefighters can see your house under smoky conditions.
- 18 Shut off the air conditioning.

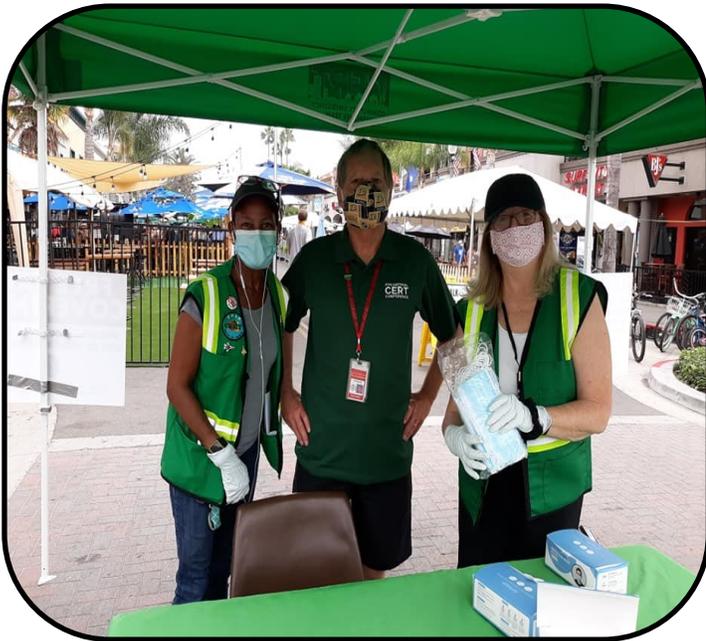
## ANIMALS

- 19 Locate your pets and keep them nearby.
- 20 Prepare farm animals for transport and think about moving them to a safe location early.

# MASK DISTRIBUTION BOOTHS



**MASK DISTRIBUTION BOOTHS JULY 25-26, 2020 (continued)**



# CITY OF HUNTINGTON BEACH CERT

## *Neighbors-Helping-Neighbors*

**MISSION STATEMENT:** The mission of the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Program is to provide information and training on disaster preparedness; provide leadership and coordination during an emergency, and assistance to help victims recover from an emergency.

### Upcoming CERT Events & Activities

### CPR Classes

To be Determined

To be Determined

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### **IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT!**

**CERT Website:** [www.huntingtonbeachca.gov/cert](http://www.huntingtonbeachca.gov/cert) **CERT Contact:** [CERT@surfcity-hb.org](mailto:CERT@surfcity-hb.org)  
**CERT Message line 714-536-5974 (THIS IS A MESSAGE LINE ONLY!)**