

CERT MONTHLY

The newsletter of the Hays County
Community Emergency Response Team

WWW.HAYSCOUNTYCERT.COM



July 2025



Hays County CERT volunteer Mel Barrentine leading a section of the G-317 course for MTC staff at Kyle Correction Center.

Prepping for the Prep Fair

It doesn't seem possible but the Hays County Preparedness Fair is just around the corner! This past Monday, Candy met with CERT section chiefs to share details about the upcoming fair, which takes place September 13 at La Verde Park in Kyle. The location is just to the north of the PAC where we've held previous fairs.

With the Hays County OES partnership with the City of Kyle this year, we anticipate an increase in attendance. But that's a good thing - it means more of our residents will learn about being prepared in case of an emergency or disaster. And that means we are continuing our goal of building a more resilient community.

This is definitely an all hands on deck situation! And CERT is a key player in the manning of the event. There will be three shifts that day and volunteers can work a portion of a shift if needed. Our hope is that CERT volunteers can work a four-hour shift. We have a lot to cover!

See Pg 16 for a free opportunity to see a fantastic speaker: Chief Rick Lasky. Takes place in Leander on August 13.

Please send Kim H. ideas for stories and photos from events and trainings. Your help means so much - thanks in advance!

In this issue

Welcome	Pg 1
Message from the Program Manager	Pg 2
Volunteer Spotlight	Pg 3-4
CERT G-317 and Other Training	Pg 5
CERT Calendar	Pg 6
CERT Community Partners	Pg 7
CERT Store	Pg 8
Help Needed	Pg 9
CERT Pics	Pg 10-14
Birthday Shout-outs	Pg 15
Prep Fair Info	Pg 16



CERT Monthly Meetings

Hays County CERT holds a monthly meeting on the third Tuesday of each month. Check the calendar (and emails) for info!

Like and Follow our public-facing FB page!

<https://www.facebook.com/hayscocert/>

Message from the Program Manager

We are about half way through another Texas summer and CERT is gearing up for the annual Hays County Emergency Preparedness Fair!

The event, scheduled for Saturday, Sept. 13, is our “big” event each year. CERT plays a major role in this fair and we definitely need as many volunteers as possible. If you can sign up for one of three shifts that day (or more if you’re up to it), we would greatly appreciate your help.

Check your emails for additional info and the sign-ups!

Our next CERT member meeting, scheduled for August 19 at 6:30 p.m., will be primarily focused on this event. We will discuss all the details and review the site layout maps. There are many ways for you to get involved!

Paul and I will attend the National CERT Conference August 4-9. Just because the cats are away, don’t think the mice can play! Our team is busy at work with everything from logistics nights to events to prepping for the fair. If you’re available to help, please reach out. Our leadership team is always grateful for your much-needed support!

We’ve been gradually getting a lot done across the county on our Thursday evening work nights. Thank you for your support! And also to those who took extra time to come into the office to assist with backend work – thank you!

Our success hinges on all of your support and I’m so grateful to be part of such a great group of volunteers.

Thank you for making my job enjoyable!

Candy

“Work ethic is giving great effort to complete a task.
Passion is giving great effort to advance a cause.”
- Simon Sinek

Candy Lonie, CERT Program Manager



CERT by the Numbers

Total Accepted Members = 261
HCOES & At Large = 15
Buda Division = 29
Dripping Springs Division = 22
Kyle Division = 31
Buda/Kyle Combined = 60
San Marcos Division = 28
Wimberley Division = 15
TXST Division = 120
G-317 Field Deployable = 219

Volunteer Spotlight

Hannah Amaya first learned about CERT in the early days of her high school tenure at San Marcos High School.

“Our criminal justice teacher and the Hays County Pct. 1 Office showed us how to do a search and rescue operation,” Hannah said.

She was a high school senior when COVID hit and locked things down for months. Her freshman year at Texas State University (TXST) was not the norm for a college student. But she realized sometimes, you just have to push through.

“I’m a first-generation college student,” Hannah said. “I knew I had to just keep moving forward.”

One thing that helped that first year was getting involved in campus groups. Hannah said she joined the Sociology Club to make friends, since her classes were mostly online.

In her senior year, Hannah and two other students created a TXST chapter of the Austin Sunshine Camp; it’s a camp for foster kids.

“We had 42 members by the end of the year,” she said.

What was her secret to getting so many other students involved?

“Appeal to people’s heart, honestly,” she said.

She recalled how at fraternity house presentations, she would appeal to their sense of a male identity crisis.

“I’d tell them these kids are lost right now,” she said. “I’d show them how they could impact someone’s life. How they could be a good role model.”

She graduated with a degree in Applied Sociology and Criminal Justice minor. Hannah is now a graduate student working toward her MA in Public Administration, also at Texas State.

She said her educational experience thus far helped her understand that there are different perspectives in life. It also led her toward working for a nonprofit or as a public servant.

“My dad is a public servant,” she said.

Jesse Amaya works in the Hays County Transportation Department.

Continued on Pg. 4



Have a spotlight Suggestion? Email [Kim Hilsenbeck](#), our Public Information Team Lead.



"I know that I want to do something where I can give back to the community," she said. "I could never work for an insurance company or something like that."

This year, she is an intern with Hays County OES and helps with Hays County CERT.

Why OES?

"I needed an internship in government," she said. "And I learned that emergency services is everything you can think of including public outreach. I've learned so much that I didn't learn in school."

Part of her OES internship includes working with Candy Lonie on CERT and with the SRP task force.

"SRP has been my favorite so far," Hannah said. "The work is very optimistic. We work as one county, one team."

Hannah recently attended a symposium at the Texas School Safety Center where OES Planner Laurie Taylor was presenting.

Her work with CERT includes partnering with Thundercloud Subs, Hannah's employer for the past five years.

"I help coordinate getting food during CERT deployments with first responders," she said. "Making sure our first responders and our CERT volunteers are fed is huge. Giving is a powerful tool."

Thundercloud Subs also generously agreed to provide lunch for CERT volunteers during the upcoming Hays County Emergency Preparedness Fair, happening Sept. 13 at La Verde Park in Kyle.

What does Hannah like about CERT?

"Seeing how motivated and determined folks are in this organization," she said. "Everyone cares. The volunteers embody public service."

She added that she also sees how the community pulls together and shows its humanity during a crisis.

"Working here encouraged me to put in my application to the TXST Campus CERT," she said.

PS - We're fairly sure she will be accepted.

Fun Fact:

Hannah just built her own PC. From scratch! How did she learn to do that? She said It's kind of a hobby. "I was determined to make my own PC," she said. She watched YouTube videos and read tutorials, learning more about the process each day. She even named this PC: **Roxanne!** "It meant a lot to do it myself," she said.



G-317 and Other Training

- Free
- Useful
- Important

LOCATION #1

Wimberley Presbyterian Church
Fellowship Hall
965 FM 2325
Wimberley, Texas

Unit 1 - Tuesday, September 30, 2025 – 6:30 to 9:00 pm
Unit 2 - Thursday, October 2, 2025 – 6:30 to 8:00 pm
Unit 3 - Tuesday, October 7, 2025 – 6:30 to 9:00 pm
Unit 4 - Thursday, October 9, 2025 – 6:30 to 8:00 pm
Unit 5 - Tuesday, October 14, 2025 – 6:30 to 8:15 pm
Unit 6 - Thursday, October 16, 2025 – 6:30 to 9:30 pm
Unit 7 - Tuesday, October 21, 2025 – 6:30 to 9:00 pm
Unit 8 - Thursday, October 23, 2025 – 6:30 to 8:00 pm


Saturday, Oct. 25 - Callout Training (8 a.m.- noon) and Exercise (1-5 p.m.) at the Hays County Public Safety Building in San Marcos. This is for both classes and ALL CERT members.

LOCATION #2

Hays Co. ESD#5/Kyle Fire
Station #1
210 W Moore Street
Kyle, Texas

Building a More Resilient Community!

Hays County CERT will run two G-317 courses this fall, one in Wimberley, the other in Kyle. Attend all classes to become certified, or drop into courses in which you have an interest! Be sure to share this info with friends and family.



The poster features the Hays County Office of Emergency Services logo with the word 'CERT' in large green letters. To the right, it says 'Hays County Community Emergency Response Team'. Below this, a red banner reads 'Learn More about Being Prepared for Emergencies'. A dark blue banner below that says 'Our G-317 Classes are Starting Soon!'. The text 'Drop into Classes or Take the Entire Course' is in blue. A list of class topics is provided, including Disaster Preparedness, Disaster Medical Operations, Stop the Bleed, CRASE, Disaster Psychology, Fire Safety & Utility Controls, and Light Search and Rescue. There are two circular images: one showing people in a classroom setting and another showing people in a field with emergency equipment. A green button says 'LEARN MORE & SEE THE FULL SCHEDULE'. At the bottom, it says 'CERT is part of the Hays County Office of Emergency Services' next to the Hays County seal, and the website 'www.hayscountycert.com'.

Hays County Office of Emergency Services
CERT
Community Emergency Response Team

Hays County Community Emergency Response Team

Learn More about Being Prepared for Emergencies

Our G-317 Classes are Starting Soon!

Drop into Classes or Take the Entire Course

Some of our Class Topics:

- Disaster Preparedness
- Disaster Medical Operations
- Stop the Bleed
- CRASE
- Disaster Psychology
- Fire Safety & Utility Controls
- Light Search and Rescue

LEARN MORE & SEE THE FULL SCHEDULE

CERT is part of the Hays County Office of Emergency Services

www.hayscountycert.com

Unit 1 - Monday, September 29, 2025 – 6:30 to 9:00 pm
Unit 2 - Wednesday, October 1, 2025 – 6:30 to 8:00 pm
Unit 3 - Monday, October 6, 2025 – 6:30 to 9:00 pm
Unit 4 - Wednesday, October 8, 2025 – 6:30 to 8:00 pm
Unit 5 - Monday, October 13, 2025 – 6:30 to 8:15 pm
Unit 6 - Wednesday, October 15, 2025 – 6:30 to 9:30 pm
Unit 7 - Monday, October 20, 2025 – 6:30 to 9:00 pm
Unit 8 - Wednesday, October 22, 2025 – 6:30 to 8:00 pm

Upcoming Events

Campus CERT Meetings

These will resume in the fall

Hays County Health Department Back to School Fair

August 2, 7 a.m.-2:30 p.m.

Wimberley Market Days

August 2, 7 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

TXST Commencement Ceremonies

August 2, 8 a.m.-8 p.m.

Weekly Prep Fair Planning Meetings

Beginning August 19, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

TXST Move-In Weekend

August 16-18

Hill Country Heroes Fundraiser

August 23, 8:30 a.m.-1p.m.

CERT G-317 Training

Two courses; see Pg. 5 above for dates and locations

Also see Calendar for details and registration info

Callout Training

Saturday, Oct. 25, 8 a.m.- noon

CERT Exercise

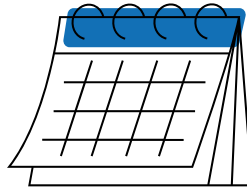
Saturday, Oct. 25, 1-5 p.m. at the Hays County Public Safety Building in San Marcos. This is for both G-317 classes and ALL CERT members.

*Thanks for all you do as
CERT members!*

CERT Calendar

- Trainings
- Events
- Meetings

Find more details on
our [CERT calendar](#)!



Visit the [CERT calendar](#)
for the sign-up links!

SAVE THE DATE

September 13 -
Hays County Emergency
Preparedness Fair
All Hands On Deck!!

TSA/ABIA K9 Decoy Training Assistance

See our [Calendar Page](#)
for details.

***Please sign up for events
to help CERT support
our community!***

CERT COMMUNITY PARTNERS



**WE APPRECIATE
YOUR SUPPORT!**



Hays County CERT appreciates every organization and business that so generously helps us. The continued support of the following businesses and organizations is critical to our mission.

We greatly appreciate how business owners and local organizations rally to assist CERT, and the Office of Emergency Services, during emergencies and beyond.

Please accept our gratitude!

[Alsco \(Kyle\)](#)

[AMVETS Post 115 \(Kyle\)](#)

[Buda Lions Club](#)

[City of Kyle Parks Department](#)

[Dripping Springs Distilling](#)

[Hays City Store](#)

[Hays County Commissioner Michelle Cohen, Pct. 2](#)

[Hays County Commissioner Debbie Ingalsbe, Pct. 1](#)

[Hays County Fire Chiefs Association](#)

[H-E-Bs in Buda, Kyle, San Marcos, Wimberley](#)

[Hill Country Trophy \(San Marcos\)](#)

[Kyle Fire Department/ESD #5](#)

[Fire Marshal Mark Schultz \(Kyle FD\)](#)

[Martin Taylor](#)

[Root Cellar \(San Marcos\)](#)

[San Marcos Emergency Management](#)

[Tea2go/TeaN'ergy \(Kyle\)](#)

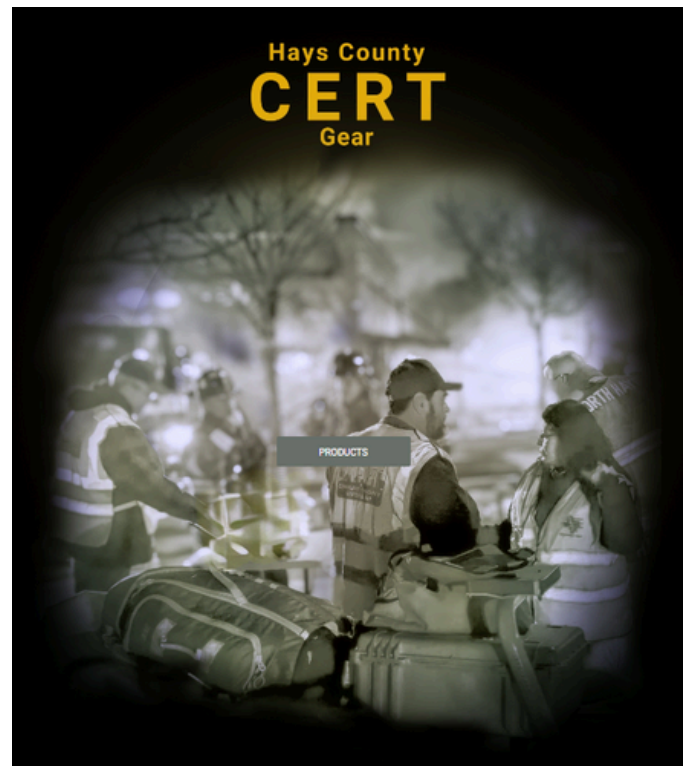
[Thundercloud Subs \(San Marcos\)](#)

[Wimberley Cafe & Marco's Italian](#)

Want to be a CERT Community Partner? Email [Candy Lonie](#)

CERT Store

Get all your CERT
gear at our
online store!



Check out the CERT web store!

All the items will be delivered to the Hays County OES building in San Marcos and distributed from there.

Many thanks to Chuck Koenen for all his hard work on this project!

Know someone who might want to help us build a more resilient community? Share our website and social media with them!



CERT Needs



Interested in being part of our Food Unit team? This [link](#) provides a basic review of food handling. Though not everything will apply to us, best practices whenever possible is always optimal. If interested, please take the two-hour online course. There is a minimal fee of \$7. Once completed, email a copy of your card to Paul Freeman and Sue Richards.



We are looking for CERT members to become CPR/AED/First Aid Instructors. If interested, please email Paul Freeman and Sue Richards.

Can you help?

Here at Hays County CERT, we know we have many talented, creative and resourceful volunteers. Each of you helps make this organization even better. Here are some of our current needs - can you help us with one of these areas?

- Photographers for Social Media/Newsletter/Website
- Videographers for Training Classes
- AV techs for Meetings and Trainings
- Communications – Writers and information gatherers (social media, website, newsletter)
- Assistance in Logistics – choose your area: Food Unit, Medical Unit, Supply Unit, Communications Unit, Facilities Unit, Ground Support Unit
- Assistance in Planning – choose your area: Processes and documentation, Event planning and IAP development, Mission documentation
- Training – Classroom Support, Position Task Book tracking, Instructor
- 2025 Awards Planning Committee
- Community Preparedness Outreach (Booths and/or Presentations)
- Administration – choose your area: Volunteer Communications, New Member Enrollment, Reporting and Documentation
- Operations – Rehab, SAR (including evidence and missing person), Traffic Control, Crowd Management, Damage Assessment, Debris Management, Reunification, Sheltering/Mass Care, Family Assistance Center, Family Resource Center, Volunteer Resource Center, Animal Response

If you can help with any of the above areas, please contact Candy Lonie 512-781-2088, or one of your Section Chiefs/Leaders:

Gordon DeWitte (gordon.dewitte.hccert@gmail.com) – Operations Chief or Rickey Clement Deputy Operations Chief
Mel Barrentine (melvin.barrentine.hccert@gmail.com) – Planning Chief
Paul Freeman (paul.freeman.hccert@gmail.com) or Sue Richards (sue.richards.hccert@gmail.com) – Administration
Noah Dennis (noah.dennis.hccert@gmail.com) – Logistics
Sandi Barber (sandi.barber.hccert@gmail.com) – Community Preparedness Outreach
Kim Hilsenbeck (khilsenbeck71@gmail.com) – Communications, Public Information, Photographers
Rick Hagy (Richard.Hagy.hccert@gmail.com) – Safety Officer

Large Animal Rescue Response Training

Hays Co. CERT doesn't horse around with training and planning for emergency response. Large animal rescue response training was recently held at Dripping Springs Ranch Park. Getting hands-on experience dealing with horses that might be brought to the facility in an emergency situation were CERT members Sandi Barber, John Ropollo, Greg Gillenwaters (not pictured) and Rowe Ray.



Damage Assessments in WilCo

Shoutout to the Hays County CERT members who volunteered to assist with flood damage assessments in Williamson County. Texas Division of Emergency Management expressed gratitude along with surprise for the speed and diligence of their work. Photo are of Mel Barrentine and Shan Murphy.

Pics



Pics

G-317 Training at Kyle Correctional Center

Shout out to our CERT members who recently conducted G-317 training for MTC staff at Kyle Correctional Center. This training helps people be prepared for just about any emergency situation. Thanks to our trainers: Gordon DeWitte, Rowe Ray, Rachel Maldonado, Mel Barrentine, Maria Tomasso, John Roppolo, and Mike Jones; Arianna Clement provided classroom support.



Pics

Logistics Work Night

Thanks to our CERT volunteers who showed up for a Logistics Work Night in San Marcos! These folks help us keep things orderly, which helps us be better prepared.



Adaptive Field Day

Hays County CERT volunteers (Mel and Sheila) helped out at the recent Adaptive Field Day in Kyle. They provided a cooling and first-aid station. With them was a new Hays County employee, Jacob. This City of Kyle event took place at Lake Kyle. The field day was thoughtfully designed for individuals with physical and cognitive disabilities.

Pics



Happy Birthday!



July Birthdays

Evans Martinez
Epifanio Quiroga
Howard Blatt
Anna White
Kathy Stephens
Harlan Smith
Paulina Alvarez
Veronica Johnson
Debbie Hyde
Dixie Davis
Ruben Becerra
Colton Cerday
Stephanie Ramos
Selah Castillo
Minyoung Seon
Cassandra Rodriguez
Lydia Bruce
Rachael Andrews
Dillon Gee
Christopher Werner
Chinyere Amadi
Arianna Diaz
Litzy Lopez
Charles Johnson
David Ryle
Mike Jones
Alana Trammell
Savannah Pack

Join Hays County CERT for the 2025 Hays County Emergency Preparedness Fair!

2025
Preparedness
Fair



ARE YOU PREPARED?

In Partnership with:



Benfitting:



Join us at the

Hays County 8th Annual Emergency Preparedness Fair



Saturday
September 13, 2025



Hours
10 a.m. - 5 p.m.



La Verde Park
3901 Burnham | Kyle, Texas



What To Expect?

- ✓ Preparedness demos
- ✓ Silent auction
- ✓ Live music
- ✓ Local first responders
- ✓ Chili Cook-off contest



Learn more at
www.hayscountycert.com



CHIEF LASKY

WHAT MAKES A GREAT FIRE DEPARTMENT?

Date: 8/13

Time: 8am to 5pm

TEEX Course number:

ARE 106-522

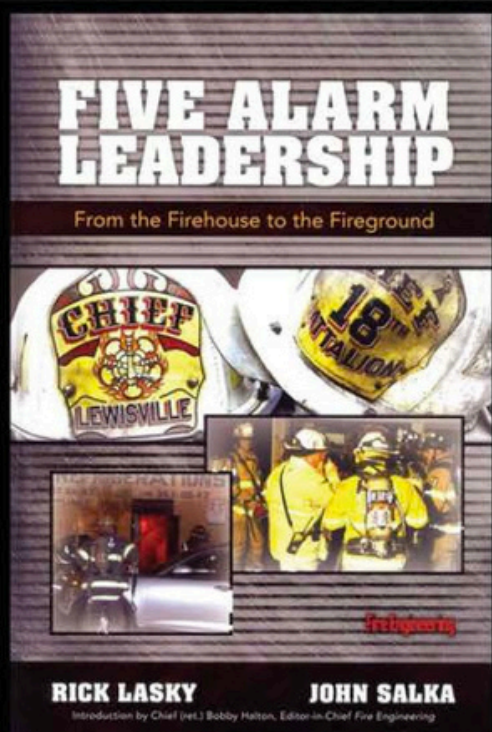
Location: 1393 E Woodview dr, Leander 78641



<https://tinyurl.com/mr3a8a4a>



FIVE ALARM LEADERSHIP: REAL LEADERSHIP WITH REAL PEOPLE



Five Alarm Leadership is a dynamic program that is designed to energize and motivate the people in your department to perform and excel in everything they do. This program outlines many of the common situations that fire departments and fire companies find themselves in and presents suggestions and solutions to those situations. Chief Lasky, a 40-plus year veteran of the fire service has experienced many of the challenges and hurdles that your fire department is facing. He has learned through his experience as a company grade officer, command-level officer, and executive officer, how to treat people, how to motivate them, mentor, to coach and counsel them, and in some cases discipline them, so that they want to come back and contribute even more to this great profession. Issues such as integrity, inspiration, interest, innovation, insight and initiative are all discussed and applied to life in the firehouse and on the fireground. Join Chief Lasky as he guides you through your most difficult but vital role as a leader in the fire service.



CHIEF RICK LASKY

is a 40-plus year veteran of the fire service. Rick followed in his father's footsteps beginning his career as a firefighter in the suburbs on the southwest side of Chicago and while in Illinois received the 1996 International Society of Fire Service Instructors "Innovator of the Year" award for his part in developing the "Saving Our Own" program. He served as the co-lead instructor for the H.O.T. Firefighter Survival program at FDIC for over 10 years, is a long-standing editorial advisory board member for Fire Engineering Magazine and also serves on the FDIC advisory board. Rick is the author of the best-selling books "Pride & Ownership: A Firefighter's Love at the Job" and "Five Alarm Leadership: From the Firehouse to the Fireground" published by Fire Engineering Books and is the co-host for the podcast "The Command Post" heard on FireEngineering.com as well as the podcast "Old School." Rick has served as both a career and volunteer firefighter and in 2017 was the recipient of the Tom Brennan Lifetime Achievement Award.