

Perkins County residents are asked to become part of an emergency response team to assist local law and fire officials in times of disaster.

Perkins County Emergency Manager, James Brueggeman, seeks residents to join a Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program, which educates people about disaster preparedness for hazards that may impact their area and trains them in basic disaster response skills.

“The simple fact is that response by local law and fire officials in a disaster situation only goes so far. Having volunteers trained and ready to also respond is critical for the positive outcome of a potential disaster,” Brueggeman said.

Perkins County had a similar team several years ago; it disbanded because of a drop in volunteers.

Brueggeman feels, however, it is time to reestablish a team because of its importance to community safety, and because of the current availability of grant dollars for volunteer training.

Volunteers would complete 20 hours of training to be qualified for the team, which would include disaster response skills in fire safety, light search and rescue, team organization and disaster medical operations.

Eight people are required for a team to be created.

Once eight volunteers have been identified, a class training date will be set, Brueggeman said. The training will be paid for with grant money from Homeland Security, he said.

Those who would like to volunteer for the CERT program, or who have questions, are asked to call Brueggeman, or Deputy Emergency Manager Karon Harris, Monday through Friday 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. at 308-352-4564. Or residents may also email Brueggeman at sheriff@perkinscoso.org