

How to Recruit Volunteers for Your Neighborhood Emergency Response Team

17 practices for adding talent & enthusiastic support to your volunteer group

1. Recruit all the time, even when the team is complete!

(Add a recruiting footnote to every article, every announcement, every speech, every email because turnover will be constant. Survival is not a loner activity -- you need your neighbors.)

2. Know the kind of member you want.

(What values are essential? What won't work with your group?)

3. Know what skills you want.

(Need a particular background? Interest? Medical, military, scouting, camping, communications?)

4. Have an application procedure.

(Can be very simple, but shows you are serious.)

5. Describe the training they'll get.

(Our new team members get a vest and hand-held radio when training is complete.)

6. Dispel any myths about volunteering.

(How much time? How much physical activity? Any special skills?)

7. Clarify any liability.

(Describe limits and expectations. Know the "Good Samaritan Laws" in your state.)

8. Proclaim the benefits to the volunteers!

("What's in it for me?" New friends, giving back, belonging to a team, learning new skills.)

9. Extend a personal invitation.

(Make a phone call, hold a personal meeting, present to small groups.)

10. Find out what the volunteer is looking for.

(You may be surprised what you'll uncover!)

11. Have take-home materials.

(Print a professional-looking brochure or flyer.)

12. Staff a table at fairs and community events.

(You may need signage, brochure holders, giveaways, etc.)

13. Schedule a talk at community group meetings.

(Show off your PowerPoint skills! Ask a lot of questions to get your audience involved.)

14. Show volunteers in action.

(Get permission if you show a volunteer's ID – face, car, etc.)

15. Publish articles.

(Churches, other groups are always looking for good articles for their newsletters or websites.)

16. Promote online.

17. Keep the volunteers you have.

(Thank them publicly and privately, recognize them with badges, gear, etc.)

*These tips tested and approved by the team at **EmergencyPlanGuide.org***