

Civilian First Responders are Ready for Anything

About 60 people received training as first responders by the Community Emergency Response Team.

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CERT training is no challah bake — these women have learned a range of emergency techniques in first aid and triage that can save lives.

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The Community Emergency Response Team training at Congregation Beth Jacob in Toco Hills is teaching about 60 people to serve as civilian first responders to a wide range of emergencies before police officers or firefighters get there — from a broken leg to a gas main break, tornado to terrorist attack, first aid to mass medical triage.

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CERT participants understand that they are "the help until help arrives." They could save a life or property in an emergency by taking simple actions immediately. The CERT training frees police and fire teams to focus on the most complex tasks.

On Sunday, Jan. 28, the trainees learned such emergency skills as how to tie slings and tourniquets, put on splints, and treat burns and bleeding. They previously learned how to organize and manage the actions of teams, understand disaster psychology, create disaster preparedness kits, put out small fires, and handle other many other tasks.

The DeKalb Emergency Management Agency is presenting the training and has customized it to meet the needs of the community, including synagogue and church members in Toco Hills and communities such as Sandy Springs and Stone Mountain.

The intensive program, delivered in five double sessions, has customized content, including "verbal judo," autism awareness and fire drills with real fire.

Anyone interested in bringing this free training to a school or synagogue should visit www.marketpoweronline.com/cert-tocohills. The training's organizers are ready to offer guidance in making the program successful at other locations.

Photos by Joel Alpert

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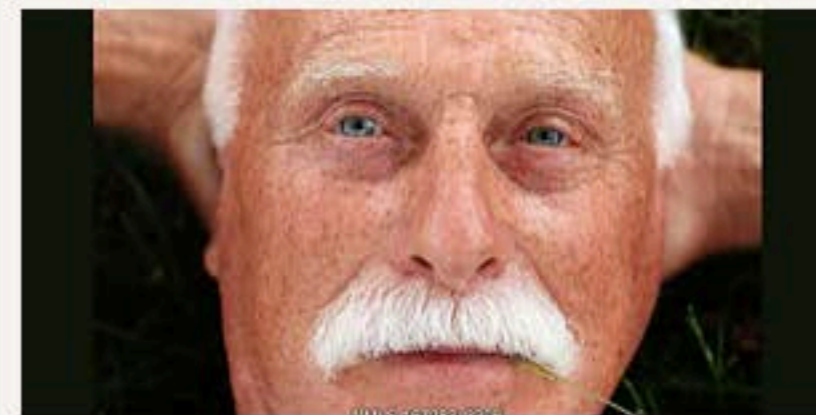
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