

# CITIZEN CORPS

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### **What is a CITIZEN CORPS COUNCIL?**

On April 4, 2002, President Bush created the Citizen Corps to help coordinate volunteer activities that will make our communities safer, stronger, and better prepared to respond to any emergency situation. He asked cities and counties across the country to create Citizen Corps Councils of their own design, bringing together first responders, volunteer organizations, law enforcement agencies, and community-serving institutions, such as schools, hospitals, and houses of worship, to assist in this common effort.

### **Why are the Jaycees Involved?**

Because we believe service to humanity is the best work of life. Throughout our history we have stepped up when our communities needed help. From building parks and playgrounds to disaster relief, the Jaycees have been there. Today, with the challenges that confront our nation, it is time to lead the way again.

### **What can my chapter do today to get started?**

The first step is to find out if a Citizen Corps Council already exists in your community. You can go online ([www.citizencorps.gov/councils/](http://www.citizencorps.gov/councils/)) or simply pick up the phone and call the mayor, city manager, or county commissioner's office and ask if they have, or are planning, a Citizen Corps Council. Find out the contact person; call them and ask how the Jaycees can help.

### **What if my community does not have a Citizen Corps Council?**

First, we are not asking your chapter to start the Council. Citizen Corps Councils should be started and sanctioned by your local government or through the cooperation of several local governments. The Jaycees' role is to ask and encourage local leaders to start a council. This is a [great government affairs project](#). The U.S. Junior Chamber is currently working on a formal CPG to help make this process a little easier. Until it is available, go to the Citizen Corps web site, and download and read "Citizen Corps - A Guide for Local Officials" (<http://www.citizencorps.gov/pdf/council.pdf>). This will explain the program in more detail. Schedule meetings with local officials and ask them to consider starting a Council and explain to them that the Jaycees want to take an active role.

### **Once a Citizen Corps Council is Formed what does my chapter do?**

First start asking a lot of questions. Find out what needs to be done in your community to get ready for an emergency. These questions should generate a lot of great project ideas such as community forums to inform the public about local emergency plans, distribution of preparedness literature, establishing neighborhood watch programs, sponsoring local CERT or first aide training. The possibilities are endless. Once you find project ideas get out the old CPG and go to work. Do what Jaycees do best.

### **Will this project benefit my chapter?**

It will if you take full advantage of the opportunities. Networking with local governments and businesses should open all sorts of doors to your chapter. These relationships can be leveraged into corporate sponsorships, new members, new project opportunities, and even a little extra help the next time you want to close down Main Street for a festival. Our goal is to put your chapter in a position that the next time your city or county needs a problem solved, the first thought that comes into the mayor's head is "call Joe down at the Jaycees-they can take care of that."

**MONTANA JAYCEES**  
**CITIZEN CORPS PROGRAM MANAGER:**

# CITIZEN CORPS

The mission of Citizen Corps is to harness the power of every individual through education, training, and volunteer service to make communities safer, stronger, and better prepared for terrorism, crime, public health issues, and disasters of all kinds.

Citizen Corps brings together leaders from law enforcement, fire, emergency medical and other emergency management, volunteer organizations, local elected officials, the private sector, and other community stakeholders to form Citizen Corps Councils. These Councils will tailor activities to the community and build on community strengths to develop and implement a local strategy to have every American participate in homeland security and community and family safety in three principle ways: through public education and outreach, through training opportunities, and through volunteer programs that draw on special skills and interests to support first responders, disaster relief organizations, and community safety efforts.

Citizen Corps is composed of federally sponsored programs and non-profit affiliate programs and organizations that share the common goal of helping communities prevent, prepare for and respond to crime, disasters, pressing public health needs and emergencies of all kinds. It encourages all Americans to take an active role in building safer, stronger, and better prepared communities one neighborhood at a time!

**For more information, please visit the website at  
[www.citizencorps.gov](http://www.citizencorps.gov)**

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## **--- GREAT TRAINING FOR YOUR CHAPTER MEMBERS ---**

### **ARE YOU READY? A GUIDE TO CITIZEN PREPAREDNESS.**

Produced by FEMA, this 100-page guide provides comprehensive practical information on how your family can prepare for any disaster. It includes up-to-date hazard specific safety tips, including natural and technological disasters, and newly updated information on terrorism. *Are You Ready?* is available on the Citizen Corps website, [www.citizencorps.gov](http://www.citizencorps.gov).

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## **--- GREAT PROJECT FOR YOUR CHAPTER/COMMUNITY ---**

### **NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH PROGRAM**

- Arrange for home security inspections by crime prevention officers to identify security vulnerabilities
  - Upgrade locks, security hardware, and lighting
  - Train family members to keep valuables secure and to lock windows when leaving home
  - Train family members on identifying suspicious behaviors that could indicate terrorist activity
  - Ask neighbors to watch for suspicious activity when the house is vacant
  - Organize block WATCH groups to assist children, the elderly, and other especially vulnerable persons if they appear to be in distress, in danger, or lost
  - Organize meetings with neighborhood groups and trained crime prevention officers to discuss security needs and crime prevention strategies
  - Obtain and study informative materials from the National Sheriffs' Association, the National Crime Prevention Council, and local law enforcement agencies
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