

What do Early Response Teams do?

- Provide a Christian presence. This may not sound like much of a task....and it really isn't, however, it can be the most important thing a team can do in disaster response.
- Take steps to prevent further damage to a family's personal property (stabilize) by:
 1. Tarping,
 2. Removing debris and
 3. Cleaning out flooded homes (mucking out)
- Teams need to be careful NOT to perform work on a home that might jeopardize the survivors' eligibility for assistance from insurance and /or government agencies.
- Teams need to have written permission to work on people's homes or to remove personal belongings. It is always best to have the homeowner present when working.
- Teams may be asked to manage donated materials, gather information or other things as deemed necessary by the community.
- Observe survivor's needs and report these to the local operations.
- Be part of the caring ministry of "listeners" who will help the survivor begin to heal.



The ERT Training lasts a full day. After completion of the training participants receive credentials which are required for site access during a disaster response. Participants will help by either joining an existing team or forming their own team.

To join or start an ERT in your church, cluster or district, contact your Conference Disaster Response Coordinator through the Indiana Conference Center. Contact ERT at: ert@inumc.org.

An ERT usually consists of at least 30 or more people so that there can be at least seven able to deploy on short notice. Persons that intend to serve as a team leader are encouraged to have VIM training as well. Some Disaster Response Invitations require at least one VIM trained member on each team.

If you are the kind of person who enjoys helping others in a time of need, doesn't mind getting dirty doing it and loves to serve God, this may be the ministry for you!

Early Response Team Training

A collaborative effort by UMCOR and UMVIM



Providing a caring Christian presence in the aftermath of disaster

Trained by UMCOR
Deployed by UMVIM

ERTs are Volunteers In Mission who have been trained by UMCOR trainers and are required to deploy as part of an ERT at least once during their three year UMCOR certified period to qualify for recertification.



Mission

The mission of an early response team is to provide a caring Christian presence in the aftermath of disaster.

The team is neither a first response group of emergency workers nor a recovery, rebuild or repair team. Rather, it fills a specific need in the early days after a disaster to establish the presence of the church.

It is important to understand that ERTs are trained primarily to respond within their own community. To travel to another district, conference or jurisdiction requires an invitation from that area's ERT coordinator.

All ERTs are trained by authorized UMCOR trainers and given badges by their own conference. We encourage all ERTs to wear bright green T-shirts as a means of recognition.



Logistics

This class takes an average of six to eight hours in order to complete, not including meals or breaks.

Suggested attendance of the class is between 12 and 35 people.

While there is no upper age limit, all participants need to be in good physical health.

No one under the age of 18 years should serve on an ERT.

Training is most effective when hands-on opportunities can be made readily available.



Training Overview

- Who? What? When? Why?
- Covenant agreement
- Equipping a team
- Team safety
- Safe Sanctuaries policies
- What exactly does an ERT do?
- Instructions for tasks
- Team building activities
- Forms
- Test your knowledge

