

# Cambria Fire/CERT CERT Readiness Levels

## Cambria CSD Fire Department CERT - Standard Operating Guideline

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**Title:** CERT Readiness Levels

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**Purpose:** To provide guidance for CERT Members to prepare and respond to CERT Readiness Levels.

**Scope:** To ensure that all CERT Members have guidelines on when, where & how to respond to a change in Readiness Level

**General:** This is the protocol defining the preparedness measures taken by CERT Members in preparation and response to evolving emergency conditions. The readiness levels are progressive in nature and intended to prepare the team to step up or down to the next level of readiness. If CERT activation (SOG #04-2013) is eventually required, implementation of these readiness actions will expedite and result in a smoother activation operation.

### Background

- Cambria CERT Readiness Levels are based on the National Weather Service (NWS) definitions of preparedness levels these are:
  - **Watch:** essentially means a chance this condition will happen and usually covers a large geographical area for a lengthy time period.
  - **Advisory:** are in between a WATCH and WARNING. The expected condition(s) have a pretty good chance of occurring, even a likely chance of occurring, but typically an advisory is used for less severe type of conditions. A Wind Advisory might be issued or a Freezing Rain Advisory issued instead of a High Wind Warning or an ice Storm Warning.
  - **Warning:** means the said condition is already occurring or is likely to occur and to take proper protective measures. Warnings are usually issued for much smaller geographical areas and usually for shorter more definite time periods.
- Since this set of preparedness levels are used for Red Flag Wildfire conditions, wind, lightning, surf, storm surge, severe storms, flooding, hail, rain, freezing conditions, tsunamis, and many others, it is appropriate for CERT to use the same to define our state of readiness. All emergency services utilize and adhere to these preparedness levels, except for Terrorism. In many cases a NWS alert with a similar title will accompany the Cambria CERT Readiness Alert.

# Cambria Fire/CERT CERT Readiness Levels

## Cambria CERT Readiness Levels

( '\*' = Red Flag Wildfire conditions, wind, lightning, surf, storm surge, severe storms, flooding, hail, rain, freezing conditions, tsunami, and many others )

- **Cambria CERT \_\_\*\_\_ WATCH:** The potential condition has a higher than normal probability of happening in the specified area.
  - CERT Members should be aware that conditions could worsen and the Readiness Level could increase.
  - At this level, normal communications capabilities, such as landline, cell phones, internet & TV/Radio are expected to be operational and should be the primary means of communication.
  - If associated with a NWS Red Flag Fire Watch for our area, Red Flag Fire Patrol members should be aware of the potential for activation of a Red Flag Fire Patrol.
  - Emergency communications, response & safety equipment should be available to the CERT member and operational (battery power available).
- **Cambria CERT \_\_\*\_\_ ADVISORY:** The potential conditions have been predicted for one or more areas in Cambria.
  - CERT Members should be aware that conditions in the specified area are likely to worsen.
  - At this level normal communications will generally be functional, but as conditions worsen, some random failures could occur.
  - SAMs should verify availability (email, phone or radio (if required)) with a CERT Coordinator.
  - As required, CERT Coordinators may contact Call Tree Operators to verify availability of one or more of the following Special Groups:
    - Pines in the Lines Group
    - HAM Operator
    - Red Flag Fire Patrol Group (SOG 07-2017)
    - Fire Rehab Group (SOG 05-2013)
    - Trailer Tow Driver
    - Other Group
  - For a Red Flag Fire Weather Advisory, Cambria Fire may decide to activate a Red Flag Patrol at this point. If this is the case, the Red Flag Patrol SOG will be followed.
  - A CERT Coordinator will Contact the Cambria Fire Department Captain on duty to report Cambria CERT is at the \_\_\*\_\_ ADVISORY LEVEL.
  - CERT Member emergency communications equipment is not the first line of communications, but should be activated and monitored to respond to those that lose their commercial communications. Spare batteries should be available.
  - Response Readiness: CERT members traveling away from their primary residence, should take their response and safety equipment with them. This includes mobile radios, CERT ID, car placards and contact lists.
  - CERT Members should monitor the conditions in their vicinity and report any emergency or storm related conditions to their SAM. 911 should be contacted immediately for any emergency conditions needing a response.

## **Cambria Fire/CERT CERT Readiness Levels**

- **Cambria CERT \_\_\*\_\_ WARNING:** The potential conditions have occurred or are expected to occur in one or more of the specified areas of Cambria. CERT ACTIVATION has NOT occurred yet, but the potential exists.
  - CERT Members should be aware that conditions in some or all areas of Cambria may be unsafe and could worsen.
  - At this level, normal communications methods may not be operational in some or all areas of Cambria.
  - SAMs should make contact with their members to verify availability. On check-in, members of Special Groups should be identified for:
    - Pines in the Lines Group
    - HAM Radio Operator
    - Red Flag Fire Patrol Group
    - Fire Rehab Group
    - Trailer Tow Driver
    - Other Group
  - SAMs should make contact with a CERT Coordinator to verify availability and report special team availability.
  - Emergency communications equipment may be the only means of communications for some CERT members. Radio equipment should be activated and monitored for status information and to relay contacts if necessary.
  - Response and Evacuation Readiness: Besides being prepared with CERT Response Go-Bag, CERT Members should assure that their personal Grab-and-Go Bag is readily available to respond to evacuation orders.
  - All travelers should avoid exposure to unsafe conditions.–CERT Members traveling away from their primary residence, should take their response and safety equipment with them. This includes mobile radios, CERT ID, car placards and contact lists.
  - CERT Members should monitor the conditions in their vicinity and report any emergency or storm related conditions to their SAM. 911 should be contacted immediately for any emergency conditions needing a response. If direct communications is not possible, use radio relay through another CERT member or HAM Radio Operator.
  - Depending on situation one of the CERT Coordinators will make contact with the Cambria Fire Department or the Cambria Fire Representative to the Incident Command Post (ICP) to report the readiness status of Cambria CERT.

### CERT Activation

- If CERT Activation is required, the protocols set forth in SOG #04-2013; “Activation & Deployment” will be followed.

### Scaling Down the Readiness Level

- If commercial communications channels are functioning, ‘All-CERT’ email will be used to notify CERT members of change in readiness level.
- In cases where commercial communications are not available, SAMs will be contacted through the CERT emergency communications channels. SAMs will relay change in readiness status to their members.