
Rising Creek Exercise Plan

Cupertino Office of Emergency Services

CUP-26-39T

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Version 1.2 -- ***REVIEW***



CUPERTINO

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Revision

Rev	Date	Comments
1.0	10/6/2026	Copy from CUP-26-39T
1.1	10/9/2026	With feedback from AEC Review
1.2	10/12/2026	All updates made, in final review

1 Exercise Plan

1.1 Background

1.1.1 Introduction

The Cupertino Citizen Corp (CCC) are teams of Cupertino residents who have volunteered their time and resources to support the city during an emergency. They are members of CCC's Cupertino Amateur Radio Emergency Service (CARES), Community Emergency Response Team (CERT), and Medical Reserve Corp (MRC).

The Cupertino Office of Emergency Service (OES) has developed methods and procedures that leverage this large volunteer pool for the purpose of supporting a city response. This effort is intended to use CERT, MRC, and CARES as functional responders or integrated into a seamless response capability that can be deployed during times of emergency at the discretion of the City EOC Staff.

CARES periodically exercises specific capabilities¹ to ensure on-going response familiarity by its members and Served Agencies², as well as to provide opportunities to look for and test process improvements.

This Exercise Plan addresses how we would support the city of Cupertino with Situation Status specific for a flooding event caused by rising city creeks.

1.1.2 Terms

ARK:	City-owned shipping containers, located throughout the city, are stocked with emergency supplies to support a field-based ICS field response. Staffed by Citizens Corps.
CARES:	Cupertino Amateur Radio Emergency Services provides backup and emergency communications to the city.
CCC:	Cupertino Citizen Corps: the Cupertino OES designation for the volunteer pool made up of members from Cupertino ARES, CERT, and MRC.
CERT:	Community Emergency Response Team: trained in light search & rescue, disaster medicine, fire suppression, animal care, and Help Desk.
DOC:	Departmental Operations Center.
EOC:	Emergency Operations Center; the central command and control facility responsible for carrying out the principles of emergency management, or disaster management functions at a strategic level in an emergency situation and ensuring the continuity of operation of the city.
EXPLAN:	Exercise Plan. This document provides the instructions, guidelines, and organizational information to all participants for the conduct of a specific exercise.
IAP:	Incident Action Plan.

¹ CARES Task List, <http://www.cupertinoares.org/docs/cup-ctl.pdf>, September 2023

² Served Agencies, <https://www.cupertinoares.org/index.php?content=about#whoweserve>

ICP:	Incident Command Post. A temporary physical location used for the purpose of on-scene incident command and management at the tactical level.
MRC:	Medical Reserve Corp. Volunteers that supplement the existing emergency and public health resources
NWS:	National Weather Service
OPAREA:	Operational Area. Intermediate level of government designed to support the local jurisdiction's response to disaster by providing access to the resources of the county, other cities and the state.
SEMS:	Standardized Emergency Management System. California's system for managing responses to multi-agency and multi-jurisdictional emergencies which includes the Incident Command System, Unified Command and the OpArea concept.

1.2 Purpose, Goals and Objectives

1.2.1 Purpose

The purpose of this exercise is to evaluate CCC capabilities to observe, document, and report creek conditions and neighborhood flooding risks to the Cupertino EOC. CARES will provide field-based observations and voice communications, while CERT home responders will supplement situational awareness using QuickCapture.

1.2.2 Objectives & Measures

Objectives	Measures
1. Manage field responders assigned to specific locations throughout the city	(i) Field responders are deployed within 30 minutes of initial briefing. (ii) Checks of field responders are made every 30-45 minutes. (iii) All field responders maintain communications with Net Control and report changes in their operational status.
2. Pass appropriate scenario messages to the EOC either as situation status messages for a creek rising event or 9-1-1 messages from the community by voice.	(i) 100% of originated messages are correctly received. (ii) All planned messages are passed using correct message passing techniques. (iii) Field reports contain sufficient information for the EOC to understand the observed conditions, location, and potential consequences.
3. Activate neighborhood CERT for message passing to the EOC by Quick Capture	(i) CERT uses Quick Capture to pass messages (ii) The CERT and CARES Quick Capture reports are successfully received and available for review by the EOC.

1.2.3 Concept

This will be a full-scale communications exercise based on a scenario involving a severe weather event that produces an excess of rain and has begun to swell city creeks.

1. The drill will occur over a 3-hour period on Saturday November 7, 2026.
2. CUP OEM will use AlertSCC to activate CARES and CERT members.
3. This will be a SCCo RACES Credentialed event.
4. CARES and CERT members will participate.
5. CARES responders:
 - i. Specific creek observation points will be identified based on the risk of overtopping banks and flooding roadways. All field assignments will be assigned to CARES responders.
 - ii. The CARES deployment is a contingency for loss of internet and cell service.

- iii. CARES provides observations at designated locations where automated monitoring is unavailable or where additional visual information would benefit the EOC.
 - iv. All CARES members will respond to Staging at the EOC for sign-in, briefing, receiving scenario sheets, and final instructions.
 - v. Voice message traffic will be based on time-triggered scripted messages and simulated interactions with the public.
 - vi. Packet messaging will not be deployed.
 - vii. Field assignment activities include making observations of creek levels at culverts, bridges, and creeks.
 - viii. CARES will use Quick Capture to supplement their reports with visual reports to the Cupertino EOC.
6. CERT responders:
- i. CERT responders will operate from their home.
 - ii. CERT will make observations of simulated problems within their neighborhood and report using QuickCapture.
 - iii. All CERT responders will receive an email briefing 1 or 2 days before the event with instructions.
 - iv. NEED DISCUSSION: CERT FRS/GMRS Nets will not be activated.
7. Cupertino OEM staff will be invited to watch and/or participate.
8. Messages from the EOC to the field will be passed and distributed back to the community where possible.

1.2.4 Decisions

1. **Clear mission.**
CARES will provide situational awareness by observing creek conditions and reporting those observations to the EOC. CERT will augment that information by reporting neighborhood conditions through QuickCapture.
2. **Division of responsibilities.**
CARES handles field observations and voice communications, while CERT operates from home using QuickCapture.
3. **Removing packet operations.**
Removing packet from this exercise allows participants to concentrate on the Creek Watch reporting procedures.

1.2.5 Exercise Schedule

All times are estimates. The schedule for the drill will be adjusted as necessary.

Saturday, November 7, 2026	
06:45	Drill Begins. Retrieve C469, deploy to the EOC Set up staging
07:45	Resource Net opens for CARES Travel Tracking
08:00	EOC Staging opens, Check-in at Cupertino City Hall parking lot
08:30	Begin briefing, make field assignments
09:00	Open the Resource and Message Nets
09:30	All responders are on station. Secure the Resource Net
11:10	We are directed to secure Field Ops. Demob at City Hall. Open Resource Net for return responders. Secure the Message Net when all responders check out.
11:45	Secure Resource Net.
12:30	End of the exercise.

1.3 Artificialities and Assumptions

1.3.1 Artificialities

1. The Cupertino EOC is activated as part of the scenario but will not be physically activated for the exercise.
2. Commercial cellular and internet services are assumed operational for exercise purposes, including QuickCapture reporting.
3. All field observations and reported incidents are simulated unless otherwise identified by Exercise Control.

1.3.2 Assumptions

1. The Santa Clara County EOC will not be activated.
2. The DOC will be staffed. DOC will also provide command and control for all field activities.
3. Comm 469 will be deployed.
4. We will staff for 1 operational period.
5. We respond with our current state of readiness and whomever shows up.
6. Actual Weather conditions are current. Rain alone will not result in exercise postponement; however, Exercise Control may modify or cancel field activities if conditions present an unacceptable safety risk.
7. No public interaction is planned or expected.
8. All information in the narrative is considered valid.
9. We don't have all the answers.
10. Lunch will be provided as part of a *CCC Thank You event*.

1.4 References

- City of Cupertino Emergency Operations Plan
- CARES Standard Operating Procedures
- CARES Task List v2.3
- Field Communications Operations Handbook, CARES, April 2025
- Cupertino Communications Risk Assessment and Report, Feb 2017

1.5 Exercise Control

This is a functional exercise that will be driven by scenarios and simulated conditions defined for each field response location.

1.6 Communications

1. Standard message passing procedures will be followed.
2. The CARES ICS-205 will be referenced.
3. The CARES Emergency Nets (Resource and Message) will be staffed.
4. All voice radio communications will include the phrase "THIS IS DRILL TRAFFIC".
5. Field responders will use the CARES Message Net to transmit Creek Watch SitStat reports to the DOC/EOC.
6. In the event of an actual emergency, radio communications will be preceded with, "THIS IS REAL WORLD TRAFFIC".

1.7 Safety and Security

1. All field responders will operate only from designated safe observation locations. Responders will not enter creek channels, approach unstable banks, or attempt to remove debris or otherwise intervene in flood-control operations.
2. Safety and security issues will be handled in accordance with established policies and procedures.
3. The buddy system is required for field assignments.

1.8 Evaluation

Participants will have an opportunity to critique the exercise during a post-exercise debrief session after the drill. Email submittals will also be accepted as feedback on the drill.

All feedback will be consolidated into the exercise's After-Action Report.

1.9 Reports

An After-Action Report will be completed based on the critique and evaluation of the exercise

1.10 Public Information

1. No test or instruction messages are planned for Radio Cupertino TIS 1670 AM.
2. No press releases are planned.

1.11 Instructions to Participants

1. THIS EXERCISE IS NOT A TEST OF PERSONNEL!
2. This is a training exercise designed to test capabilities, procedures, and processes.

3. The exercise evaluates the effectiveness of our communications procedures, tools, and operational processes—not individual operator performance.
4. Actions and decisions should be consistent with the procedures and training that has been conducted.
5. REMEMBER, this is an exercise and NOT a test!

1.12 Open Issues

1. IN REALITY, situating a team of one or more at a creek observation site for an extended period of time may not make sense vs giving them a route to drive to check on several locations. However, we would be doing this potentially during a rainstorm.
QUESTION: What is the exercise deployment model vs actual deployment model?

2 Drill Planning

2.1 Before the event

This list is short due to the time remaining before the exercise.

2.1.1 OBJ#2: Pass creek rising event scenario messages by voice.

1. Creek Watch SitStat message passing training as part of the Drill Prep session. Use the field Comm Reference as the guide (TBD)...

2.1.2 OBJ#3: Activate neighborhood CERT for Quick Capture message passing

1. Reissue QuickCapture instructions to all of CCC members... Ken,
2. Include QuickCapture training in Nov CARES Drill Prep meeting...
3. Deliver event details to CERT via the CERT Coordinator...

2.1.3 Other work

1. Develop ICS 204 Assignment Sheet, Creek Watch...

2.1.4 Partner Reviews

1. Meet with Cupertino OEM; brief them on the exercise plan; Ken E, Justin L...

2.1.5 Injects

1. Develop inject-by-situations to be used in the field and at home locations. Describe either something the Field Responder will observe, or someone with whom they interact that wants a message passed...

2.1.6 Planning Events

1. 12 Oct 2026: Drill introduction to CCC Steering Committee...
2. 12 Oct 2026: First reading, feedback of ExPlan, CARES...
3. 30 Oct 2026: Second ExPlan reading, feedback, CARES...

2.1.7 Training Events

1. 3 Sep 2026: CARES General Meeting, Winter Weather Cycles ... **DONE!**
2. 1 Oct 2026: CARES General Meeting, Creek Watch Refresher... **DONE!**
3. 3 Nov 2026: ...
4. 5 Nov 2026: CARES General Meeting, Topic: Drill Prep...
5. 3 Nov 2026: OTA message practice...

3 Narrative

NOTE: *This scenario is based on what could be a plausible request for emergency communications support by the city. While **strictly fictitious**, its primary purpose is to support the goal of radio comms traffic handling.*

Sunday, 1 Nov 2026. National Weather Service (NWS) issues a long-range forecast that has severe wind and rain spanning the next several weeks. The first storm hits the California coast tonight.

Wednesday, 4 Nov 2026. *It has been raining constantly over the last three days, with periodic breaks in the storm. Winds were reported with gusts reaching 35-45 miles per hour over the entire region. Public works, Valley Water, and PG&E crews have been going non-stop clearing debris and restoring power. NWS' report for today indicates that the most severe storm we have ever seen is coming over the next few days and creek and river flooding is anticipated. Some localized power outages are also possible. It will be fast-moving. If it does occur, then rain will start late Friday evening.*

Friday, 1400 PDT. The NWS reports that the winds have not died down. Rainfall totals have broken records, the ground is saturated, and reservoirs are at or near capacity. Valley Water reports that water has started over the Stevens Dam spillway and they are planning a larger controlled release. Creeks throughout the region are running high, and additional heavy rainfall is forecast for late tomorrow. Public Works and Valley Water crews remain on call to respond to storm drain blockages, debris accumulation, and localized flooding.

The Cupertino Emergency Manager activates the EOC to Level 3 and requests CARES and CERT to activate and deploy tomorrow (Saturday) in anticipation of the flooding potential. The request is to do the following:

- Deploy field teams to designated creek and drainage locations to observe and report conditions, particularly at locations with known flooding or debris concerns.
- Receive and transmit resident requests for help as received.

Friday, 1600 PDT. AlertSCC is issued directing all available CARES members to report to staging on Saturday morning for briefing and creek watch assignment.

Saturday, 0200 PDT. Lights flicker throughout Cupertino as scattered power outages occur. Several locations report downed trees and power lines.

Saturday, 0600 PDT. Continued power outages and high network demand have degraded cellular service throughout Cupertino. Voice and data service is intermittent in some areas.

Saturday, 0730 PDT. A light rain is falling throughout the area. Several Cupertino creeks are running high, and additional heavy rainfall is forecast later this evening.

End of Scenario — Exercise Begins.

4 Exercise Control Instructions

4.1 Overview

The following are the instructions to be used as part of this drill.

4.1.1 Instruction #1 – Field Assignments

For the purposes of this exercise, the following locations are identified as possible deployment destinations. Each Field Responder will receive a written scenario sheet that describes observations made or interactions with individuals who cannot reach 9-1-1 and are looking for help. This input will form the basis for creating and passing message to the EOC.

Suggested (and minimal) staffing is indicated by the number in parenthesis

1. DOC at ICP (1)

DOC will be the primary interface between the deployed CCC members and the EOC. DOC will receive inbound message traffic and originate requests and instructions as necessary. Pass on PIO traffic to field units.

2. Comm Van (4)

Manages the field resources. Staffing:

- a. Shift Supervisor (1)
- b. NCO, Resource Net (1)
- c. NCO, Message Net (1*)
- d. Radio Operator backup (*) – Scribe and/or NCO backup
- e. Staging (F) - Signs in field responders, gets the Demob form header filled out. These resources may be drawn from other staff before deploying to the field.
- f. Demob (F) – receives Demob Forms from Staging, follows checklist.

3. Creek Observation Points (20)

These are suggested sites for Creek Observations. A two-person team of CARES and/or CERT field responders per assignment. Locations include:

- a. Stevens Dam parking lot
- b. Stevens Creek at McClellan Road
- c. Stevens Creek at Stevens Creek Blvd
- d. Regnart Creek Trash Rack
- e. Regnart Creek at Festival Drive
- f. Regnart Creek at Kim Street
- g. Regnart Creek at Rodrigues
- h. Calabazas Creek at Bollinger
- i. Calabazas Creek at Miller
- j. Calabazas Creek at Stevens Creek Blvd
- k. Calabazas Creek at Tantau
- l. Saratoga Creek at Sterling Barnhart Park

These are too many for practical deployment and these sites need to be fully assessed for an actual emergency activation.

