



# 2010 Achievement Awards

Recognizing the Best in County Government Programs!

## **Nomination Packet**

*Roanoke Valley Regional Fire Training Tower*



**Roanoke County, Virginia**  
**Roanoke County Fire & Rescue**  
**5925 Cove Road**  
**Roanoke, Virginia 24019**



# 2010 VACo Achievement Awards

Deadline: June 1, 2010

## Application Form

All applications must include the following information. Separate applications must be submitted for each eligible program. Deadline: June 1, 2010

### Program Information

Locality Roanoke County

Program Title Roanoke Valley Regional Fire Training Tower

Program Category Criminal Justice & Public Safety

Population Category (4) 50,001 to 100,000

### Contact Information

Name Richard E. Burch, Jr.

Title Chief of Fire & Rescue

Department Roanoke County Fire & Rescue

Complete Mailing Address 5925 Cove Road, Roanoke, VA 24019

Telephone # Fax # (540) 777-8701 Fax: (540) 777-9773

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### Signature of county administrator or chief administrative officer

Name Dan O'Donnell

Title Assistant County Administrator

Signature\* \_\_\_\_\_

\*Entries without this signature will not be accepted.

## **2010 Virginia Association of Counties Achievement Awards**

### **Roanoke Valley Regional Fire Training Tower**

The Roanoke Valley Regional Fire Training Tower is a newly constructed, state-of-the-art structure that allows firefighters from across the Roanoke Valley and beyond to train for a range of fire scenarios including residential, commercial, high rise, confined space and rappelling.

The previous fire training burn building was built over 20 years ago and had reached the end of its useful life. The concrete building itself along with the internal fire boxes would require extensive modifications at a significant cost.

In 2007, the four Roanoke Valley Regional Fire-EMS partners – the County of Roanoke, City of Roanoke, City of Salem, and Town of Vinton – discussed the possibility of a new fire training facility and decided to apply for a Virginia Department of Fire Programs (VDFP) grant that would assist with the cost of constructing a new facility.

The localities received the maximum amount allowed through the VDFP Burn Building Construction Grant Program — a gift of \$430,000 with the requirement the building be completed within 24 months. The supplementary cost needed for the project was divided between the localities through a training center cost-sharing agreement. Roanoke Valley firefighters now have a high-tech fire training facility that has a life expectancy of up to 50 years.

The Roanoke Valley Regional Fire Training Tower project was completed in just over one year and was within budget at a cost of \$780,000. The building is fueled by

natural gas, which burns clean and reduces the region's carbon footprint. It has a four-story tower with a two-story residential annex. Additionally, it offers two burn rooms, a standpipe, rappel anchors, a non-toxic smoke system, a moveable maze, a confined space section and an attic.

Sharing costs by working regionally saves each locality a significant amount of money while yielding a technologically advanced training facility to benefit firefighters in the Roanoke Valley and beyond.

### **Additional History of Roanoke Valley Regional Fire-EMS Training Center**

The Roanoke Valley Regional Fire-EMS Training Center was dedicated in September 2000 as a partnership between the County of Roanoke, City of Roanoke, City of Salem and Town of Vinton. Prior to this date, the burn building and other fire training props on this site were owned and operated by Roanoke County Fire & Rescue Department.

The 2000 dedication was the beginning of a valley-wide partnership that brought firefighters together from across four jurisdictions for training on a regular basis. Since then, the localities have established a regional hiring process that streamlines the pre-screening testing and allows applicants to complete one process no matter how many jurisdictions they are applying with. Additionally, 12 Regional Fire-EMS Recruit Schools have been held at the training center. In 2005, the training center became an accredited EMT-Intermediate training site through the Virginia Department of Health, Office of Emergency Medical Services - (should be em dash) one of only three such entities in

Virginia. Today, the training center has exceeded expectations of projected use as it is utilized seven days a week for a host of training topics by each of the four jurisdictions as well as other outside agencies.

At the Roanoke Valley Regional Training Center there are a number of other training simulators that bring firefighters train on, including:

- **Trench Simulator** with underground tunnel system for confined space training
- **Pump Test Pavilion** for testing of all fire apparatus with water pumps. Site has an underground tank that circulates the water from the truck through the pump to the tank and back to the truck, saving thousands of gallons of water each time it is used
- **Three train cars** that simulate train accidents with trapped victims, hazardous material spills and confined space training
- **MAYDAY- FIREFIGHTER DOWN** mock-up that allows personnel to learn how to save their fellow firefighter when they become trapped under debris or have fallen through a collapsed floor
- **High-Tech Emergency Driving Simulator** that reduces fuel consumption and equipment usage by having personnel train on two separate simulators — one for ambulances and one for fire trucks
- **Dirty Classroom** for debriefing and evaluating after training scenarios
- **Former Burn Building**, which will be used for search and rescue and other non-burn training

## The Roanoke Valley Regional Fire Training Tower



The Roanoke Valley Regional Fire Training Tower dedicated in 2009 was built with grant money sought by the four Roanoke Valley localities. Additional funds needed for construction were divided among the localities through a cost-sharing agreement.

The previous burn building had reached the end of its useful life for live burns but will remain on site for other training scenarios, such as search and rescue.



The Roanoke Valley Regional Training Center is located in Roanoke County and is operated and managed by the four fire and rescue departments within the Roanoke Valley.



## **Short Overview**

### **Roanoke Valley Regional Fire Training Tower**

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