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2014 Achievement Awards



2014 VACo Achievement Awards

Deadline: June 2, 2014

Application Form

All applications must include the following information. Separate applications must be submitted for each eligible program. **Deadline: June 2, 2014.**


Program Information

Locality Pulaski County, VA
Program Title Emergency Management Deputy Coordinators
Program Category Criminal Justice and Public Safety

Contact Information

Name Pete Huber
Title County Administrator
Department Administration
Complete Mailing Address 143 Third St. NW, Suite 1, Pulaski, VA 24301
Telephone # 540 980-7705 Fax # 540 980-7717
E-mail phuber@pulaskicounty.org

Signature of county administrator or chief administrative officer

Name Pete Huber
Title County Administrator
Signature 

Call for Entries

Pulaski County, Virginia Emergency Management Deputy Coordinators

Problem: Like most localities, Pulaski County had one emergency management coordinator who felt responsible for responding to emergency situations on a 24/7 basis. While, the County provides compensatory time and support from other departments, our emergency management coordinators were getting burned out and Pulaski County experienced the back-to-back loss of emergency management coordinators due to the hiring of regional staff by the Virginia Department of Emergency Management. In addition, we did not have anyone ready to step into the emergency management position when these vacancies occurred.

Solution: It was determined that hiring of three part-time deputy emergency management coordinators would provide the full-time coordinator with the ability to only be on call every fourth weekend. Applications were solicited for deputy coordinators with applications primarily coming from volunteer fire departments. The cost to the County consisted of paying training costs for the three deputies, paying an on-call stipend and paying deputies when they were called out. This solution provided the County with the following major improvements:

1. The ability to rotate on-call weekends such that coordinators only have to be on-call one weekend per month;
2. The ability to maintain the coordination of emergency responses when the Emergency Management Coordinator was out of town attending training or providing mutual aid assistance to other localities;
3. The capability to easily rotate coordinators during emergency situations in order to provide sustained 24-hour coordination; and
4. The opportunity to select from at least three qualified applicants should a vacancy occur in the employment of an Emergency Management Coordinator.

Results: The above described system was put together approximately 5 years ago. Since then, the County faced a moderate flood in 2010 and twin tornados of 2011 as well as other, less complicated, situations. Emergency response to several situations was successfully handled by the deputy coordinators (once due to the Coordinator being out of town at a training function, once due to being on a response to a mutual aid need by another locality, and once due to disability retirement of the coordinator). Furthermore, emergency management coordinators have built a level of trust such that coordination duties were readily handed off other allowing for a prolonged and sustainable response. And finally, the hiring of part-time deputy

coordinators allowed the County to quickly fill this most recent vacancy by promoting a part-time deputy coordinator into the full-time emergency coordinator position.