



### **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

#### **GENERAL**

##### **Q. What are the FEMA Individual and Community Preparedness Awards?**

Now in its seventh year, the FEMA Individual and Community Preparedness Awards Program is a national recognition program that highlights innovative local practices and achievements by recognizing individuals, organizations, and jurisdictions that have made outstanding contributions toward making communities safer, stronger, better prepared, and more resilient.

##### **Q. What is the deadline for award submissions?**

The deadline for award submissions is April 10, 2015 by 11:59 P.M. E.T.

##### **Q. What are the application requirements?**

Applicants or those nominating others must complete a FEMA 2015 Individual and Community Preparedness Application Form (available at <http://www.ready.gov/citizen-corps/citizen-corps-awards>). The Description of Achievement should be at least two pages, but no more than five pages in length and typed in Arial at 12 font size. You may submit your Description of Achievement as a separate file.

##### **Q. What is the eligible time period for achievements to be considered for a 2015 FEMA Individual and Community Preparedness Award?**

All submissions must feature achievements occurring between January 1, 2014 and April 10, 2015.

##### **Q. Are there different award categories? What are they?**

There are 9 competitive award categories and one honorary award conferred by the selection committee.

#### **Outstanding Citizen Corps Council**

Presented to a Citizen Corps Council (community, county, regional, tribal, or state) that demonstrates whole community collaboration to achieve innovative and sustainable practices in emergency management to make the jurisdiction safer, stronger, better prepared, and more resilient, e.g. plan review and exercises, public education, training and engagement; government/non-governmental partnerships and integration of services, capacity building.

#### **Community Preparedness Heroes**

Presented to an individual or group in recognition of their outstanding commitment, achievements, and leadership in disaster preparedness and response in their communities.



### **Awareness to Action**

Presented for the effective use of outreach and messaging techniques not only to raise awareness about hazards and disaster preparedness, but also persuade members of the public, organizations, and whole communities to take action to prepare. America's PrepareAthon!-branded events are an excellent example of activities that may be considered for this category.

### **Technological Innovation**

Presented for creative and effective use of current technology, or newly developed technology that improves the ability of individuals and communities to prepare for, respond to, or recover from disasters.

### **Outstanding Achievement in Youth Preparedness**

Presented to an organization, program, or jurisdiction that increases youth preparedness; engages youth to educate others in disaster preparedness; or, incorporates the voice of youth in development, outreach, and assessment of preparedness programs. The organization or program selected must align with the National Strategy on Youth Preparedness Education.

### **Preparing the Whole Community**

Presented to an organization, program, or jurisdiction that successfully engages the whole community to improve disaster preparedness and resilience, including targeted population segments such as people with low income, language and cultural diversity, and people with disabilities and others with access and functional needs.

### **Outstanding Community Emergency Response Team Initiatives**

Presented to a Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) or CERT Program that has made a significant contribution to response or recovery efforts during a disaster; has demonstrated innovation in operations, outreach, or training practices; or, excels in educating community members about disaster response skills and preparedness.

### **Outstanding Citizen Corps Partner Program**

Presented to a Citizen Corps Partner Program that demonstrates excellence and innovation in achieving the program's mission. Eligible programs include: Fire Corps, Neighborhood Watch, Medical Reserve Corps, and Volunteers in Police Service. Volunteer recruitment and sustainment, capacity building, and return on investment are factors for evaluation.

### **Excellence in Volunteer Sustainability**

Presented to a volunteer program supporting emergency preparedness and response that has successfully implemented innovative and creative solutions for keeping volunteers engaged year-round and executed successful strategies for securing resources for long-term sustainability.



### **The John D. Solomon Whole Community Preparedness Award**

Named for the late creator of the groundbreaking blog, *In Case of Emergency, Read Blog: A Citizen's Eye View of Public Preparedness*, the John D. Solomon Whole Community Preparedness Award is conferred by the selection committee for special recognition in whole community preparedness in the spirit of the inclusive and collaborative nature of his work.

Mr. Solomon's work was striking in its reporting, analysis, engagement, and impact in preparing the public, informing professionals, and bringing about change in both the public and private sectors. John organized conferences, proposed legislation, posted interviews, evaluated how government and non-government organizations were using social media tools, promoted others' initiatives to policy makers, organized contests to foster citizen preparedness, and interviewed emergency management leaders, including FEMA Administrator Craig Fugate, for preparedness tips for his video series "What Should I Tell the Public?"

Administrator Fugate once stated that Mr. Solomon "set the standard for what it means to be part of our nation's emergency management team."

### **ELIGIBILITY AND CRITERIA**

#### **Q. Who can apply for a 2015 FEMA Individual and Community Preparedness Award?**

Five award categories have designated applicant requirements:

- Outstanding Citizen Corps Council Award: only open to registered Citizen Corps Councils
- Community Preparedness Heroes: designated for an individual or individuals
- Outstanding Community Emergency Response Team Initiatives: CERTs and CERT Programs
- Outstanding Citizen Corps Partner Program: open to Fire Corps, Neighborhood Watch, Medical Reserve Corps, Volunteers in Police Service, and CERT Programs
- Excellence in Volunteer Sustainability: for volunteer programs serving emergency preparedness and response

The other four award categories are open to any individual, program, organization, or jurisdiction engaged in individual and community preparedness. This includes local government officials and organizations, e.g. tribal councils, mayors, local emergency managers, local emergency planning councils, homeland security task forces, faith-based, civic, or volunteer organizations, private sector entities, registered Citizen Corps



Councils, CERTs, and Citizen Corps Partner Programs and Affiliates, and other volunteer programs.

Winners of a 2014 Individual and Community Preparedness (ICP) Award are ineligible to submit an application for a 2015 award; recipients of a 2014 honorable mention are welcome to apply.

**Q. Can I submit an application for my own organization or does my organization need to be nominated by someone else?**

You may submit an application for your own organization, you may be nominated by someone else, or you may nominate an organization you believe deserves recognition.

**Q. Can applicants apply for more than one award category?**

Applicants may apply for up to two award categories.

**Q. Do applications need to specifically address the award category in the application?**

Yes. Applicants should select an award category and write their Description of Achievement to demonstrate excellence for that category. Applicants should highlight specific initiatives, events, programs, and outreach efforts aligned to the category for which they are applying.

**Q. Does a Citizen Corps Council have to be registered to be nominated for an award?**

Yes. All nominated Citizen Corps Councils must be registered and approved on <https://www.citizencorps.fema.gov/cc/secure/index.do> as of **April 10, 2015** to be considered for a FEMA Individual and Community Preparedness Award.

**Q. Can a local Citizen Corps Partner Program or Affiliate (e.g. CERT, Medical Reserve Corps, Fire Corps, Volunteers in Police Service, Neighborhood Watch) be nominated for a FEMA Individual and Community Preparedness Award?**

Any individual or organization engaged in individual and community preparedness may apply for or be nominated for a FEMA Individual and Community Preparedness Award.

**Q. Can a CERT and Medical Reserve Corps team be jointly nominated for a FEMA Individual and Community Preparedness Award?**

Multiple individuals and organizations may be jointly nominated for an award.

**Q. Can previous applicants try again this year?**

Yes. Only winners of a 2014 Individual and Community Preparedness Award are ineligible to apply in 2015.

**Q. Can previous winners apply again this year?**



Winners of a 2014 Individual and Community Preparedness Award are not eligible to apply in 2015, but winners from previous years may apply again this year. Winners of a 2014 Individual and Community Preparedness Award may also nominate others for a 2015 award.

### **Q. Can anyone endorse or write a letter of recommendation for a FEMA Individual and Community Preparedness Award applicant?**

Written endorsements and letters of recommendation must come from a local government official or organization, tribal leadership, a Citizen Corps Council, Partner Program, or Affiliate. Letters of endorsement may strengthen your application, but are not required. The following links provide more information.

Citizen Corps Councils: <https://www.citizencorps.fema.gov/cc/secure/index.do>

Citizen Corps Partner Programs: <http://www.ready.gov/citizen-corps-partner-programs>

Citizen Corps Affiliates: <http://www.ready.gov/citizen-corps-affiliate-programs>

To find a Citizen Corps Council or Partner Program near you, visit <https://www.citizencorps.fema.gov/cc/searchCouncil.do?submitByZip>

## **SUBMITTING AN APPLICATION**

### **Q. How do I submit an awards application?**

Applicants or those nominating others must email their Application Form and supporting materials to [citizencorps@fema.dhs.gov](mailto:citizencorps@fema.dhs.gov) with the subject line: **“2015 FEMA Individual and Community Preparedness Award Application”** by April 10, 2015 11:59 p.m. E.T.

### **Q. How will an applicant know his or her award submission was received by FEMA?**

Once an award application is submitted and is received by FEMA, an e-mail notice of receipt will be sent to the applicant.

### **Q. What if I have questions or don't receive a confirmation notice that FEMA received by application?**

Should you encounter any problems or difficulty in submitting your application materials or if you have any questions, please contact us at [citizencorps@fema.dhs.gov](mailto:citizencorps@fema.dhs.gov).

### **Q. In addition to my Description of Achievement, I would like to include supplemental materials with my application. Are there any restrictions?**

Supplemental materials are welcomed but not required, but you may submit additional materials to make your application stronger. If included, supplemental materials should not exceed three attachments and five megabytes (5 MB). You may also send website links to supporting materials, videos, and informational products instead of attaching the



materials themselves.

### Q. How can I reduce the file size of attachments to comply with the supporting material file size guidelines?

The following are a few recommendations for condensing files and instructions on how to do so:

Compressing pictures by reducing the resolution (Instructions based on Microsoft Office 2010):

1. Click the picture that you want to reduce the resolution.
2. Go to the **Format tab** at the top right and click **Compress Pictures** in the Adjust group. This should bring up the Compress Picture dialog box.
3. In the Compress Pictures dialog box, under Compression options, ensure that the **Apply only to this picture** option is checked.
4. In the Compress Pictures dialog box, under Target Output, select the **E-mail (96ppi): minimize document size for sharing**.
5. Click **Okay**.

*Note: By reducing the resolution of the picture, it will reduce the quality of the picture.*

Converting files to PDF (Instructions based on Microsoft Office 2010):

1. Click on the **File tab** on the top left.
2. Select the **Save As**. This should bring up the Save as dialog box.
3. In the **Save as Type** drop down menu, select **PDF**.
4. Next to **Optimize for**, select **Minimum Size** to reduce the file size.
5. If you want to open the file immediately after saving it, select the **Open File after Publishing** (this option is available only if you have a PDF reader installed on your computer).
6. To specify various options for the file, click **Options**. Once you are finished, click **OK**.
7. Click **Save**. If you want to make changes to the PDF after saving it, return to your original Microsoft Office 2010 file make the changes and save the file as PDF again.

## SELECTION PROCESS AND AWARDS

### Q. Who will review the award submissions?



Award submissions will be reviewed by FEMA, the International Association of Emergency Managers (IAEM), National Emergency Management Association (NEMA), the American Red Cross, Target, and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).

**Q. When will winners of the 2015 Individual and Community Preparedness Awards be announced?**

Winners of the 2015 FEMA Individual and Community Preparedness Awards should be announced in the fall of 2015.

**Q. Are there any monetary rewards associated with the awards?**

There is no cash award associated with the FEMA Individual and Community Preparedness Awards.

**Q. Is there an awards ceremony?**

One representative for the winner of each award category will be invited to attend an awards presentation and community preparedness roundtable. Winners will receive their awards during a ceremony and will also share their experiences, ideas, solutions and questions on community preparedness with other award winners and selected officials. The date and location of the ceremony and roundtable will be confirmed after the winners are announced.

**Q. Can I view last year's winners and finalists or those from previous years?**

You can learn more about the Individual and Community Preparedness Award honorees from previous years by visiting <http://www.ready.gov/citizen-corps/citizen-corps-awards>.

Please e-mail additional questions to [citizencorps@fema.dhs.gov](mailto:citizencorps@fema.dhs.gov). Thank you.