



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

GENERAL

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

Now in its fifth year, the FEMA Individual and Community Preparedness Awards (**formerly the Citizen Corps Achievement Awards**) is a national awards program that honors outstanding individuals, organizations, Citizen Corps Councils, and programs working to make our communities safer, stronger and better prepared for any disaster or emergency event.

Q. What is the deadline for award submission?

The deadline for award submissions is **June 5, 2013 at 11:59 p.m. E.D.T.**

Q. Where can I submit an awards application?

You can submit an application to citizencorps@fema.gov. Please make sure to include the subject line: "2013 FEMA Individual and Community Preparedness Award Application" in your submission.

Q. What is the period during which an applicant's activities or programs must have occurred in order to be eligible for a 2013 FEMA Individual and Community Preparedness Award?

The applicant's activities, initiatives or programs must have occurred during the period between January 1, 2012 and June 5, 2013, to be considered for a 2013 FEMA Individual and Community Preparedness Award.

Q. Can you provide a description of each award category?

Award Categories

Outstanding Citizen Corps Council Initiatives

Presented to a Citizen Corps Council that demonstrates sustainable and innovative practices and noteworthy achievements which make citizens and communities safer, stronger and better prepared to manage any emergency situation.

Outstanding Local Citizen Corps Council Initiatives

Presented to a Local Citizen Corps Council that demonstrates sustainable and innovative practices and noteworthy achievements which collectively make the local community safer, stronger and better prepared to manage any emergency situation.

Outstanding Community Emergency Response Team Initiatives

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



Outstanding Achievement in Youth Preparedness

Presented to an organization or program that engages youth in its initiatives to educate the whole community in disaster preparedness. The organization or program selected will embody a mission focused on youth preparedness and will excel in informing youth about being prepared for any disaster event.

Preparing the Whole Community

Presented to an organization or program that successfully reaches out to all aspects of its community in order to improve resiliency and emergency management outcomes, including local, tribal, state and territorial partners; non-governmental organizations such as faith-based and non-profit groups and private sector industry; to individuals with access and functional needs; and to individuals and families.

Awareness to Action

Presented to an organization, individual or program that uses effective messaging techniques and activities that not only raise awareness about hazards and disaster preparedness, but also persuades members of the general public to take action to prepare themselves, their families and their communities. Eligible activities include exercises, drills, trainings, events and awareness campaigns.

Community Preparedness Heroes

Community Preparedness Heroes are individuals who will be recognized for their outstanding commitment, achievements and leadership in disaster preparedness and response in their communities.

ELIGIBILITY AND CRITERIA

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

Any individual, program or organization engaged in individual and community preparedness may submit an application for a 2013 FEMA Individual and Community Preparedness Award. This includes individuals, government officials and organizations (e.g., tribal councils, mayors, local emergency managers, Local Emergency Planning Councils, homeland security task forces, civic or volunteer committees, registered Citizen Corps Councils, CERTs), and Citizen Corps Partner Programs and affiliates. Partner Programs include Fire Corps, USA on Watch, Medical Reserve Corps, and Volunteers in Police Service, as well as the CERT program. A full list of all affiliates can be found at www.ready.gov/citizen-corps-affiliate-programs

Nonaffiliated individuals and organizations are also encouraged to apply, but are required to include a letter of recommendation or written endorsement from a government official or organization (e.g., tribal councils, mayors, local emergency managers, Local Emergency Planning Councils, homeland security task forces, civic or volunteer committees), or a Citizen Corps Partner Program or affiliate, with their application materials. To find a Citizen Corps Council or Partner Program near you, visit www.ready.gov/citizen-corps/find-your-nearest-council. Enter your ZIP code to find Councils and Partner Programs in your area.



Q. Is a nomination required to be eligible for the FEMA Individual and Community Preparedness Awards?

Local government officials and organizations, as well as Citizen Corps Partner Programs and affiliates, may submit an award application without a nomination. However, individuals and organizations not affiliated with Citizen Corps are required to include a letter of recommendation or a written endorsement from a local government official or organization, or a Citizen Corps Partner Program or affiliate, as part of their application.

Q. If an applicant is required to include a letter of recommendation or written endorsement from a local government official or organization, how are local government officials and/or organizations being defined?

Local government officials and organizations can be defined as tribal councils, mayors, local emergency managers, Local Emergency Planning Councils, homeland security task forces, civic or volunteer committees, registered Citizen Corps Councils, registered CERT programs or Citizen Corps Partner Programs and affiliates.

Q. Where can an applicant find a list of the Citizen Corps Partner Programs and affiliates authorized to provide a letter of recommendation or written endorsement for a FEMA Individual and Community Preparedness Award?

A list of Partner Programs that can provide a letter of recommendation or written endorsement for a FEMA Individual and Community Preparedness Award can be found at www.ready.gov/citizen-corps-partner-programs. A list of eligible affiliates can be found at www.ready.gov/citizen-corps-affiliate-programs. Local government officials and organizations that may provide a letter of recommendation or written endorsement include mayors, local emergency managers, Local Emergency Planning Councils, homeland security task forces, civic or volunteer committees and registered Citizen Corps Councils and CERT programs.

To find a Citizen Corps Council or Partner Program near you, visit www.ready.gov/citizen-corps/find-your-nearest-council. Enter your ZIP code to find Councils and Partner Programs in your area.

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

No. Written endorsements and letters of recommendation must come from local government officials and organizations or Citizen Corps Partner Programs or affiliates. For a list of Partner Programs and affiliates that can provide a letter of recommendation or written endorsement for a FEMA Individual and Community Preparedness Award, please visit www.ready.gov/citizen-corps-partner-programs.

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 www.ready.gov/citizen-corps as of June 5, 2013 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?



Yes. Any individual or organization engaged in individual and community preparedness may 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?

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

Q. Can previous applicants try again this year?

Yes. Previous applicants may apply for an award again this year as long as the information they provide is updated to include activities taking place between January 1, 2012 and June 5, 2013.

Q. Can previous winners apply again this year?

Yes. Previous award winners and honorable mentions may apply again this year. FEMA will accept updated language and supporting materials from previous applications that includes activities taking place between January 1, 2012 through June 5, 2013.

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

Yes. Applicants may apply for up to two award categories, but should only submit one application package or have one submitted on their behalf. Although submissions for up to two award categories will be accepted, applicants are encouraged to focus on describing, in detail, one aspect of their submission, rather than providing general information about multiple activities.

SELECTION PROCESS AND AWARDS

Q. How will the award submissions be reviewed?

Award submissions will be reviewed by FEMA, the International Association of Emergency Managers, the National Emergency Management Association, Target, and the American Red Cross. Award winners are expected to be announced in Fall 2013.

Q. What are the award categories?

Applicants should highlight specific initiatives, events, programs and outreach efforts aligned to one of the following award categories:

- Outstanding State Citizen Corps Council Initiatives
- Outstanding Local Citizen Corps Council Initiatives
- Outstanding Community Emergency Response Team Initiatives
- Outstanding Achievement in Youth Preparedness
- Preparing the Whole Community
- Awareness to Action
- Community Preparedness Heroes

Q. What is the John D. Solomon Preparedness Award?

The John D. Solomon Preparedness Award is presented by DHS/FEMA in recognition of a distinguished organization, program or individual who has made a profound impact to ensure our nation is more resilient to any disaster or emergency event. This award embraces and



carries forward the work the late John D. Solomon did in setting the standard for what it meant to be part of our nation's emergency management team.

John's blog, [In Case of Emergency, Read Blog: A Citizen's Eye View Of Public Preparedness](#) was launched in March 2008 as research for a book he was writing on emergency preparedness from the vantage point of a father-husband-and-son interested in helping safeguard his family and community. John passed away in November 2010 but his body of work is striking in its reporting, analysis, engagement and impact in preparing the public, informing professionals, and effecting change in the public and private sectors. John reported from conferences he'd helped to organize as well as those he had not; posting interviews and being interviewed; drafting legislation to support the sale of emergency supplies via "tax holidays"; evaluating how government and non-profit disaster relief organizations were using social media tools; celebrating others' initiatives by bringing to the attention of policy makers; conducting contests to foster citizen preparedness; and videotaping leaders in the preparedness community for their tips on readiness for his series "What Should I Tell the Public?" including one with FEMA Administrator Craig Fugate, which they filmed just two months before John's death. At his passing, Administrator Fugate stated that John "set the standard for what it meant to be part of our nation's emergency management team."

Q. Are there any monetary rewards associated with the awards? What is meant by "community preparedness roundtable" in Washington, D.C.?

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

Q. When will winners of the 2013 Individual and Community Preparedness Awards be announced?

Winners of the 2013 FEMA Individual and Community Preparedness Awards are scheduled for announcement in Fall 2013.

Q. Can I view last year's winners and finalists or ones from prior years?

Yes. You can learn more about previous Individual and Community Preparedness Award Honorees by visiting www.ready.gov/citizen-corps-awards. Click on the tabs corresponding with previous honorees to read more about their accomplishments.

You can also view more information at:

- [White House Champions of Change](#)
- [White House Blog](#)
- [FEMA Blog](#)



COMPLETING THE APPLICATION FORM

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

Yes. Applicants are asked to submit examples of outstanding achievements in individual and community preparedness they deem worthy of recognition. Applicants should highlight specific initiatives, events, programs and outreach efforts aligned to one of the following categories:

- Outstanding State Citizen Corps Council Initiatives
- Outstanding Local Citizen Corps Council Initiatives
- Outstanding Community Emergency Response Team Initiatives
- Outstanding Achievement in Youth Preparedness
- Preparing the Whole Community
- Awareness to Action
- Community Preparedness Heroes

Q. If an applicant has been working on more than one initiative, should there be one application that includes all of the initiatives or one application for each initiative?

No. Each nominee may only submit one application package, or have one package submitted on their behalf. Although FEMA permits applicants to submit one award package for up to two award categories applicants are encouraged to focus on describing, in detail, one aspect of their submission instead of providing more general information about multiple activities.

Q. How should an applicant submit an awards application?

Applications and supporting materials must be received by June 5, 2013, 11:59 p.m. EDT. Supporting materials should be sent to citizencorps@fema.gov with the subject line: **“2013 FEMA Individual and Community Preparedness Award Application.”** Please submit your application and supporting materials electronically only, via e-mail. Should you encounter any problems or difficulty in submitting your application materials in an electronic format, please contact us at citizencorps@fema.gov.

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 and/or nominator.

Q. How can an applicant reduce the award application and/or supporting material file size to align with the recommended file size guidelines?

FEMA recommends applicants keep the narrative describing the individual(s), program(s), initiative(s), and/or activity(ies) being submitted for recognition to between two (2) and five (5) pages. Supplemental materials are welcome but not required. If included, supplemental materials should not exceed three attachments or five megabytes (5 MB). Zip files count as single attachments, but please keep in mind that the awards inbox has a limited amount of space. Large attachments may cause the inbox to reject the file. The following are a few recommendations for condensing files and instructions on how to do so:

Compressing pictures (Instructions based on Microsoft Office 2007):

1. Click the picture that you want to compress.



2. Under Picture Tools, on the Format tab, in the Adjust group, click Compress Pictures.
3. To compress the selected picture only and not all of the pictures in the document, select the Apply to Selected Pictures Only check box.
4. Click Options and then, under Compression Options, select the Automatically Perform Basic Compression on Save check box.

Reducing the resolution of pictures (Instructions based on Microsoft Office 2007):

1. Click the picture for which you want to change the resolution.
2. Under **Picture Tools**, on the **Format** tab, in the **Adjust** group, click **Compress Pictures**.
3. To change the resolution for the selected picture only and not all of the pictures in the document, select the **Apply to Selected Pictures Only** check box.
4. Click **Options** and then, under **Target Output**, click the resolution that you want.

Sending website links to supporting materials, videos, and informational products instead of attaching the materials themselves.

Converting files to PDF (Instructions based on Microsoft Office 2007):

1. Click the Microsoft Office Button in the top left corner, point to the arrow next to Save As, and then click PDF or XPS.
2. In the File Name list, type or select a name for the file.
3. In the Save as Type list, click PDF.
4. If you want to open the file immediately after saving it, select the Open File After Publishing check box. This check box is available only if you have a PDF reader installed on your computer.
5. Next to Optimize for, click Minimum Size to reduce the file size.
6. To specify various options for the file, click Options. Once you are finished, click OK.
7. Click Publish. If you want to make changes to the PDF after saving it, return to your original Microsoft Office 2007 system file in which you created it and save the file as PDF again.

Please e-mail additional questions to citizencorps@fema.gov. Please also note that by applying for the FEMA Individual and Community Preparedness Awards, you consent to the use of the contents of your application in other FEMA materials. Hard copy materials, such as photographs, will not be returned. Thank you.