



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Why was the name changed from the National Citizen Corps Achievement Awards?

The name was changed this year to reflect FEMA's intent to recognize the achievements of all of the outstanding individuals and organizations that work to make the nations' communities better prepared and more resilient, including the Citizen Corps councils.

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

Any individual or organization engaged in individual and community preparedness may submit an application for a 2011 FEMA Individual and Community Preparedness Award. This includes individuals, local government officials and organizations (e.g., 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.citizencorps.gov/partnersandaffiliates/affiliate.shtm.

Nonaffiliated individuals and organizations also are encouraged to apply, but they are required to include a letter of recommendation or written endorsement from a local government official or organization, or Citizen Corps Partner Programs or affiliates, with their application materials. To find a Citizen Corps Council or Partner Program near you, visit www.citizencorps.gov and look for the **Get Involved** section on the left-hand side. Enter your ZIP code to find Councils and Partner Programs in your area.

What is the period during which the applicant's activities or programs must have occurred in order to be eligible for a 2011 FEMA Individual and Community Preparedness Award?

The applicant's activities, initiatives, or programs must have occurred during the period between January 1, 2010, and June 1, 2011, to be considered for a 2011 FEMA Individual and Community Preparedness Award.

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 awards 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.

Where can an applicant find a list of the Citizen Corps Partner Programs and affiliates that are 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.citizencorps.gov/partnersandaffiliates/. A list of eligible affiliates can be found at www.citizencorps.gov/partnersandaffiliates/affiliate.shtm. 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, registered Citizen Corps Councils, CERTs.

To find a Citizen Corps Council or Partner Program near you, visit www.citizencorps.gov and look for the Get Involved section on the left-hand side. Enter your ZIP code to find Councils and Partner Programs in your area. Nearby Citizen Corps Councils can also help you contact local affiliates.

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 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.citizencorps.gov/partnersandaffiliates.

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 be nominated for a FEMA Individual and Community Preparedness Award.

Can a CERT and MRC team be jointly nominated for a FEMA Individual and Community Preparedness Award?

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

Can previous applicants try again this year?

Previous applicants may apply for an award again this year as long as they update the information submitted in previous years to include activities taking place during this year's award period (January 1, 2010, through June 1, 2011).

Can previous winners apply again this year?

Previous award and honorable mention recipients may apply again this year. FEMA will accept updated language and supporting materials from previous applications to include activities taking place during this year's award period (January 1, 2010, through June 1, 2011).

Can I view last year's winners and finalists or look at application guidance materials from previous years?

The winners and finalists from 2009 and 2010 exemplify the innovative practices and achievements of communities and individuals across the Nation that make our neighborhoods safer, stronger, and better prepared to manage any emergency situation. These award winners illustrate how citizens can take action and do their part to be prepared. To view the winners and finalists from 2010, please visit www.citizencorps.gov/councils/awards/. For the 2009 winners and finalists, visit www.citizencorps.gov/news/awards/2009achievementawardwinners.shtm. To view last year's application materials, please visit www.citizencorps.gov/news/awards/index.shtm.



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

All nominated Citizen Corps Councils must be registered and approved on www.citizencorps.gov as of August 26, 2011, to be considered for a FEMA Individual and Community Preparedness Award.

Do applications need to specifically address an award category?

Applicants are asked to submit any examples of outstanding achievement in individual and community preparedness that they deem worthy of recognition, without having to specify a category. Applicants should highlight specific initiatives, events, programs, and outreach efforts although, to help ensure consistency in assessing each application, FEMA asks that applicants limit themselves to describing no more than five such features. Applicants are encouraged to focus on describing, in detail, one aspect of their submission, rather than providing general information about multiple activities.

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?

Since each nominee may only submit one application package, or have one package submitted on their behalf, you may highlight each achievement by combining the best initiatives, programs, and events into one award package. To help ensure consistency in assessing each application, applicants should ideally describe no more than five such features. FEMA encourages applicants to focus on describing in detail one aspect of their submission, instead of providing more general information about multiple activities.

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

FEMA recommends that applicants keep the narrative describing the individual(s), program(s), initiative(s), and/or activity(ies) being submitted for recognition to between 2 and 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 shut down. 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 visit the following website to download guidance for submitting an application:

<http://citizencorps.gov/councils/awards/2011/awards2011.shtm>.

How should an applicant submit an awards application?

Applications and supporting materials must be received by August 26, 2011, 11:59 p.m. EDT. Supporting materials should be sent to citizencorps@fema.gov with the subject line: "2011 FEMA Individual and Community Preparedness Award Application." For your convenience, and our own, 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.

To download instructions for submitting an application, please visit

<http://citizencorps.gov/councils/awards/2011/awards2011.shtm>.

How will an applicant know his or her award submission was received by FEMA?

Once an award application is submitted, and once FEMA receives the submission, we will e-mail a notice of receipt to the applicant.

How will the award submissions be reviewed?

Award submissions will be reviewed by regional and national FEMA, International Association of Emergency Managers, and National Emergency Management Association representatives. Award winners are expected to be announced in September 2011.



FEMA

2011 FEMA Individual and Community Preparedness Awards

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

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

However, FEMA will provide free travel, lodging, and expenses for winners to attend an awards presentation and community preparedness state roundtable event in the Washington, D.C., area. 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, state and territory Citizen Corps program managers, and selected officials.

One winning submission will be selected to attend this year’s International Association of Emergency Managers Conference in Las Vegas, Nev., and to participate on a FEMA panel.

Please e-mail additional questions to citizencorps@fema.gov. Thank you.