



PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
February 23, 2023

Contact: Kim Y. Hylander
Senior Communications Analyst
Office: 703-792-6162
Cell: 571-722-8689
Email: khylander@pwcgov.org

Fire & Rescue System Honored During Governor's Award Ceremony

On Wednesday, February 22nd, Governor Glenn Youngkin announced the recipients of the 2022 Governor's Fire Service Awards as part of the annual Virginia Fire Chiefs Association Expo and Symposium in Virginia Beach. "I am proud to honor these remarkable fire service professionals," said Governor Youngkin. "We celebrate and thank these first responders and support staff for their extraordinary contributions to the Commonwealth." Among those honored were members of the Prince William County Fire and Rescue System.

Outstanding Fire Department Response

On January 3, 2022, Prince William County was hit with a major snowstorm of approximately 12 inches of snow with temperatures in the upper teens. The storm caused 48 miles of Interstate 95N to be shut down, stranding many motorists for over 18 hours. The Prince William County Fire and Rescue System (PWCFRS), consisting of the Department of Fire and Rescue, the Dumfries-Triangle Volunteer Fire Department and the Occoquan-Lorton-Woodbridge Volunteer Fire Department responded to Interstate 95 and established an ad-hoc rescue and public service effort to assist the stranded motorists. Establishing incident command, the combined efforts of the members of the PWCFRS provided food, water and medical attention to the citizens. Using station assets, they cleared exit ramps from the highway to allow motorists to exit the Interstate. Compiling supplies from station stocks, they distributed support in food and water, and when the system's logistics section responded, added blankets and other aid. Through the incident command process, they dispatched assets from their task force to respond to and treat several medical emergencies. In the finest tradition of the Fire, Rescue and EMS service, they answered the call without hesitation.

Virginia Fire Chiefs Foundation Health & Safety Award

The Prince William County Fire and Rescue System was also recognized by the Virginia Fire Chiefs Foundation for the Best Practices in Fire Service Health and Safety at the Governor's Fire Service Awards Ceremony. PWCFRS is a combined system consisting of career and volunteer members. The career staff switched to a 56-hour work week three years ago. During this time, the department has seen an increase in body fat at annual physicals. To counter this increase, the Health and Safety Office developed a physical fitness program that

-more-

February 23, 2023

Fire & Rescue System Honored During Governor's Award Ceremony

Page 2

includes a quarterly assessment. The goal of the program is to bring awareness to individuals about their physical abilities, body weight and resources available to provide improvement.

Phase II of the program will focus on reimplementation of the Work Performance Evaluation and increase the Peer Fitness Trainer's role in the department. Phase III will focus on outreach to the volunteer organizations with wellness and fitness resources.

Acting Chief James Forgo was excited to help accept both awards on behalf of the Fire and Rescue System. He is very proud of the men and women who serve the citizens of Prince William County and invites anyone wishing to serve our community to come and join us.

Congratulations to all!

-end-