

Charleston County News Release

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Former County Emergency Management Director Receives Award of Excellence

Chris Waters awarded by the South Carolina Society of Fire Service Instructors; Arthur Sattler of Awendaw Fire Department elected as president of the S.C. Society of Fire Service Instructors for 2008.

The South Carolina Society of Fire Service Instructors recently presented former Charleston County Emergency Management Division Director, Chris Waters, with the Frank Ballentine Award for Excellence for his service to Lowcountry citizens.

Waters, who retired from the County in 2006, received the award for outstanding service and for his years of instructing and teaching. Waters taught numerous specialized training programs to a diverse group of first responders and others who work in the field of emergency management.

Waters is a long time S.C. Fire Academy and National Fire Academy instructor. He retired from the New York Fire Department before moving to South Carolina, and is considered a national leader in hazardous materials training.

"Citizens and our first responder community have all benefited from Chris' dedicated service. This is well-deserved recognition from the people who know this best," said Keith Bustraan, Charleston County's Chief Deputy Administrator and Waters' supervisor while he worked at the county.

Chief Karl Ristow of St. Johns Fire Department presented the award to Waters during the annual Instructor Improvement conference at the S.C. Fire Academy in Columbia.

Also during the conference, Arthur Sattler, an Awendaw Fire Department engineer and firefighter, was elected president of the S.C. Society of Fire Service Instructors for 2008.

"Awendaw Fire Department has and will benefit from these two outstanding individuals," said Mike Rakoske, Fire Chief of Awendaw Fire Department. "Chris provided knowledge and leadership skills in assisting the department to develop a business plan. Arthur has worked for the department for only about one year, and he has already made a difference by making recommendations to improve the training program we had in place. Chris and Arthur are a special type of person who is dedicated to continually improve the first responder's knowledge locally and nationally."

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SIDEBAR

The mission of the S. C. Society of Fire Service Instructors is to encourage safety, promote quality and professionalism, and help develop, deliver and maintain effective fire service training to the fire and emergency services organizations in South Carolina. The conference is a weekend training seminar for fire instructors. Instructors presenting programs at the conference were Carolyn Smith-Clark, National Fire Academy Adjunct Instructor; Scott Taylor, Mount Pleasant Fire Department; and Dean Brouillette of Radiation Emergency Management Consultants.

The annual instructor improvement conference is a joint effort between the Instructor's Society and the South Carolina Fire Academy. The S.C. Fire Academy's full time staff is supported by

over 700 part-time instructors from around the state who teach programs at the academy and deliver programs to the their own department fire services and to industries around the state. Most instructors work or volunteer for a fire department or industrial fire or emergency team, and they teach part-time on their days off work.

The S.C. Fire Academy is the premier fire-training academy in the U.S. today. The fire academy provides emergency services training to municipal fire service, both paid and volunteers, airport fire departments, industrial fire brigades, and emergency teams from around the state and the Southeast. The academy's main office is located in Columbia, and has five regional offices in Florence, Charleston, Greenville, Rock Hill and Newberry that support fire service training. The fire academy and the State Fire Marshall's office make up the Division of Fire and Life Safety, which is a division of the South Carolina Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation.