

Godfrey emergency management program begins path to state accreditation

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GODFREY - The **Village of Godfrey, Illinois**, has been accepted into a new state pilot program this month & will be submitting documentation to the State of Illinois in order to achieve the “Ready to Respond Community” designation/accreditation from the

Illinois Emergency Management Agency (IEMA). The pilot program recognizes communities that achieve an enhanced level of preparedness through successful completion of 11 rigorous criteria.

Elements of the criteria include a detailed, village written, county approved comprehensive disaster plan, several FEMA training modules to be completed by Local leaders, *(like the Mayor and key village staff)* proof of NIMS *(National Incident Management System)* adoption of local ordinance, development of strong ESDA/EMA ordinances/laws for disaster response & recovery, as well as several other requirements regarding specific certifications of the ESDA team and implementation of the EOP *(Emergency Operations Plan)*.

The Ready to Respond Community Program emphasizes a “whole community” approach to preparedness that involves elected officials, government entities, volunteer and not-for-profit organizations, private industry and residents. The program is voluntary and open to communities throughout the state.

“The risks, threats and vulnerabilities facing communities in Illinois are constantly changing,” said **IEMA Director James K. Joseph**. *“It’s critical that communities continually work as a collective group to enhance and expand their preparedness efforts. The Ready to Respond Community Program provides structure and guidance to help communities tackle these challenging issues. The end result is a community with enhanced ability to respond and recovery from disasters and residents who are bettered prepared at home.”*

After certification, the Ready to Respond Community designation is valid for three years, at which time Godfrey officials can submit updated documentation in order to renew its status.

“The Village of Godfrey has taken great pride in its new comprehensive disaster plan, its restructured ESDA-emergency management program and its “whole community” approach to emergency preparedness with the public, so it was only natural for us to pursue the Ready to Respond Community designation,” said Christopher Sichra who serves as Village Public Safety Administrator and E.S.D.A. Deputy Director *“The designation shows our deep dedication to protecting the citizens, businesses and community we serve. We would be extremely proud to be recognized as one of the few communities in the entire state (and the first community in Madison County) to receive this designation.”*

Erik Kambarian is ESDA Director for the Village of Godfrey, and Fire Chief of Godfrey Fire Protection District, a separate government entity. *“GFPD has worked closely with the Village to ensure our citizens receive seamless, high quality, effective, and efficient*

emergency management services. Too many communities take a reactive approach to emergency management and try to cobble a plan together after disaster strikes. That is not the case here. With this designation, our commitment to preparedness will be recognized on a statewide basis."

The Ready to Respond Community program is the latest component of Illinois' Ready to Respond initiative. To date, only six communities have begun the process towards accreditation and only one (*Charleston, Il.*) has met the criterion to obtain it, this could potentially allow Godfrey to be the second community in the state to hold this unique designation.

Village officials hope to have all documentation completed and submitted by this June.

For any questions or concerns related to this press release you may contact Judy Peipert in the Mayor's office at (618) 466-3324

For questions or concerns regarding this you can contact Chris Sichra at: publicsafety@godfreyil.org