

NYSEMA News: Dutchess and Schuyler Counties Achieve Local Emergency Management Accreditation!



NEW YORK STATE EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION

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DUTCHESS AND SCHUYLER COUNTIES ACHIEVE NYS LOCAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT ACCREDITATION THROUGH JOINT NYS DIVISION OF HOMELAND SECURITY & EMERGENCY SERVICES AND NEW YORK STATE EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION PROGRAM

The New York State Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services (DHSES) yesterday announced Dutchess and Schuyler counties achieved first-time accreditation through New York State's Local Emergency Management Accreditation Program. The program provides county and local agencies with an opportunity to be evaluated on overall emergency management proficiency and to potentially improve or enhance

programs related to disaster planning efforts. Accreditation is valid for five years, with an opportunity to obtain reaccreditation at the end of the period.

New York State Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services

Commissioner Jackie Bray said, "As extreme weather incidents become more frequent and widespread, it is important that our communities and government partners work together to develop and maintain emergency preparedness plans that can adapt and adjust to different severe weather scenarios. Today we celebrate the success of Dutchess and Schuyler counties' emergency management accreditation and honor their commitment to keep New Yorkers safe from extreme weather and other emergencies."

New York State Emergency Management Association President and Cattaraugus

County Emergency Management Director Chris Baker said, "I am pleased Dutchess and Schuyler counties attained the status of Accredited Agency and applaud their efforts because they recognize the high standards this accreditation brings. The partnership between NYSEMA, DHSES and our partners at the local level continues to take Emergency Management in New York State to the next level."

Since 2017, the following counties have achieved accreditation: Albany, Broome, Chemung, Dutchess, Erie, Livingston, Madison, Monroe, Montgomery, Nassau, Niagara, Oneida, Oswego, Saratoga, Schuyler, Seneca, Steuben, Suffolk, Washington, Wayne, and Wyoming. New York City has also received accreditation under the program. To become accredited, emergency management offices must meet a variety of emergency management standards based on several factors including national Emergency Management Accreditation Program standards, relevant State laws, and emergency management best practices. Local government must also engage community stakeholders, including governmental and non-government partners, regarding emergency planning efforts.

DHSES administers the program on behalf of the Local Emergency Management Accreditation Council, which serves as the governing body for the program. The Accreditation Council is co-chaired by the New York State Emergency Management Association and the NYS DHSES Office of Emergency Management (OEM). The Council includes a total of eight members with the NYSEMA President and DHSES OEM Director each appointing three additional representatives to ensure the Council accurately reflects the emergency management community in New York. This includes a cross-section of emergency management professionals from across the State, including urban and rural, as well as large and small jurisdictions. Each of the appointed members serve a three-year term.

Dutchess County Executive Sue Serino said, "Dutchess County's commitment to emergency preparedness continues to be one of our highest priorities, and we are always working to ensure our residents' health and safety is protected. This New York State accreditation recognizes the Dutchess Department of Emergency Response's dedication and expertise in all of their preparedness planning efforts. Our residents can take pride in knowing that the professional team at Emergency Response are working every day to

continue to exceed the highest standards for emergency preparedness. We are truly grateful to each and every member of our DCER team and congratulate them on this well-deserved achievement.”

Dutchess County’s Acting Commissioner of Emergency Response William H. Beale said, “I am incredibly proud of my team of emergency management and public health emergency preparedness professionals, who spent hundreds of hours on this project over a period of 18 months. It is an honor to be the first county in the Hudson Valley region, between New York City and Albany, to reach this standard of excellence.”

Schuyler County Deputy County Administrator Chris Desrochers said, “Schuyler County is very proud of our Emergency Management Operations Team for obtaining accreditation with the state of New York. Their exemplary emergency service to our community has been applauded for years and served the department well in achieving this accreditation. I congratulate the team on this achievement and recognize the high standards that are indicative of this designation.”

Schuyler County Director of Emergency Services Kirk Smith said, “We are committed to building and maintaining an effective emergency management program that serves our community and collaborates with our partners. These partnerships ensure we are all working together to protect our community and provide a sense of security and safety. The NYS accreditation program is just one example of how we strive not only to meet standards and expectations but to exceed them whenever possible. This is also reflected in the ongoing dedication from our staff who support our mission.”

Additional information about the New York State Local Emergency Management Accreditation Program including program guidance, eligibility, and standards can be found on the DHSES website. Local emergency management offices looking to achieve accreditation should complete the application form and submit it to DHSES at EMaccreditation@dhSES.ny.gov.

NYSEMA is a proud to partner with the New York State Division of Homeland Security & Emergency Services representing the Emergency Management professionals throughout New York State.

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