

County and Departmental Achievements

Hanover County and several departments were recognized for outstanding achievement in the last year:

- Hanover County was ranked by America's Promise Alliance as being among the nation's **"100 Best Communities for Young People"**. It's the third time in a row that the County has received the recognition; Hanover was among 8 in Virginia. Presented by ING, the *100 Best* designation recognizes communities that make youth a priority by implementing programs that help keep children in school and prepare them for college and the 21st century workforce. The competition was open to all communities that make children and youth a priority, including small towns, large cities, counties and school districts.
- Hanover County has become only the second county government in Virginia to receive a **U.S. Senate Productivity and Quality Award (SPQA)**. Hanover is this year's only recipient of the SPQA Certificate for Commitment to Performance Excellence. "Recognition at this level is provided to organizations that have demonstrated, through their commitment and implementation of effective management principles, notable progress in building sound processes," Virginia SPQA noted in a press release from Bob Bowles, Executive Director. A non-profit, all-volunteer organization, Virginia SPQA administers the Commonwealth's version of the national Malcolm Baldrige Program, which is used by many top public and private organizations as a proven business model. Only 79 private, public and non-profit businesses in Virginia have received the SPQA Award, with Chesterfield being the only other County Government to be so recognized. Hanover Public Schools was Virginia's first School Division to receive the SPQA for Continuing Excellence. Chesterfield is also the only other county in Virginia to have both its County Government and School District receive an SPQA award.
- Fire/EMS won a 2010 **National Association of Counties (NACo) Achievement Award** for a program which has improved response times for EMS calls by more than 8%. The same program also was named "Best in Category" by the national association, which represents more than 3,000 counties. The program enables Hanover's EMS paramedics to reach stricken patients more quickly by using well-deployed Quick Response Vehicles (QRV). Changes in how QRV and other EMS units are deployed have increased efficiency without additional personnel or funding. Development of a Quick Response Program was a Fiscal Year 2010 Initiative of the Hanover County Board of Supervisors. The award-winning entry to NACo was entitled **"Next-Generation Emergency Medical Response through Data Analysis & Planning."** NACo's Achievement Awards recognize counties for "creative and innovative program development and implementation, efficient administrative management of county agencies and responsible government to local citizens." NACo is the only national organization that represents county governments in the United States.
- The Department of Economic Development received a **2010 Virginia Association of Counties' (VACo) Achievement Award** for its Dominion Resources *GreenTech* Incubator partnership with the Town of Ashland, Dominion Resources, the Virginia BioTechnology Research Park (VBRP) and the Virginia Biosciences Development Center. Opened in January, the *GreenTech* Incubator program aims to develop ('incubate') high-technology growth companies that will offer innovative products and services in the alternative energy field and other clean and green technologies. It also seeks to provide a "soft landing" for international green technology companies. VACo's Achievement Awards program

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recognizes innovative, model county government programs across the State. Only 14 programs in the Commonwealth won a VACo Achievement Award this year.

- The **International Academies of Emergency Dispatch (IAED)** accredited the Hanover County Department of Emergency Communications as an Emergency Fire Dispatch Center of Excellence. Hanover County is the 14th Emergency Dispatch Center in the world to be awarded this highest distinction. The accreditation is the result of the Department's comprehensive implementation and compliance with the Fire Priority Dispatch System and associated "20 Points of Excellence." The "20 Points of Excellence" are standards that must be met by agencies before they can receive accreditation; each point must be verified through documentation. To receive this Emergency Fire Dispatch Center accreditation, the Department had to achieve scores of no lower than 90% in seven categories and a total compliance score of at least 95%. As part of the accreditation, Hanover Emergency Communications also had to demonstrate that they comply with all standards requiring proper system oversight, fire administration controls and quality improvement programs. All emergency call-takers had to be properly certified: in Hanover's case, all communications officers get 2 ½ months of classroom training and 8-12 months of on-the-job training. This is the Department's second major accreditation in two years. In 2008, the Department became only the 123rd agency in the world to be accredited as an Emergency Medical Dispatch (EMD) Center of Excellence by the IAED.
- VACO named Hanover County as one of the 10 recipients of the **2009 Go Green Award**. The Go Green Initiative is a partnership between the Virginia Association of Counties and the Virginia Municipal League that recognizes local governments that have implemented practical actions that improve energy efficiency and reduce carbon emissions.
- The Community Services Board was the only local government agency to be recognized as a **2010 "Industry Leader"** by the National Safety Council. The Department's employees worked 250,529 hours without any time lost to injuries in 2009. The Department is one of 81 companies nationwide to be honored with the Award, which recognizes the top 5% of member companies, units and facilities that meet safety criteria. Nineteen (19) other County departments (as well as the County itself) received the Occupational Excellence Award bestowed by the National Safety Council.
- Hanover County has received a national award for the excellence of its use of Information Technology to improve the delivery of county services. Hanover was ranked first among counties with a population of 150,000-249,999 by The Center for Digital Government in the **Center's 2010 Digital Counties Survey Awards**. The Digital Counties Survey is conducted in partnership with NACo each spring. All U.S. counties are invited to participate.
- The Virginia Public Library Directors Association recognized the Mechanicsville Library as the **Outstanding Library Facility**. This is awarded for renovations or new construction. The Virginia Public Library Directors Association has named the new Mechanicsville Library as its Outstanding Facility. Facilities which were either new or renovated in 2009 were eligible for the award. Library Director Tom Shepley received the award on behalf of the Pamunkey Regional Library at the annual meeting of the Virginia Public Library Directors Association at Graves Mountain, VA on April 23.
- The Department of Public Utilities won numerous awards for meeting regulatory standards. The **Doswell Water Treatment Plant** has received a Gold Award for Excellence in Granular Media Filter Water Treatment Plant Performance from the Office of Drinking

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Water of the Virginia Department of Health. This is an annual award and the Doswell Water Treatment Plant has received it for the last six years. This award is given to those operations which achieve Virginia's goals for clarification and filtration. The VDH regulates water quality standards in the Commonwealth of Virginia. The **Ashland and Totopotomoy Wastewater Treatment Plants** have received NACWA Platinum Peak Performance Awards for five or more consecutive years of 100% NPDES permit compliance. NPDES (National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System) permits are issued by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to systems that meet the agency's requirements for protecting water quality. *Platinum Awards* are given to member agency facilities that have received *Gold Awards* for five or more consecutive years. The Ashland WWTP has had 11 consecutive years of perfect compliance and the Totopotomoy WWTP has had 5 consecutive years of perfect compliance. The **Courthouse Wastewater Treatment Plant** received a *Gold Peak Performance Award* and **Doswell Wastewater Treatment Plant** received a *Silver Peak Performance Awards* from the NACWA. Gold Awards honor treatment facilities that have achieved 100% compliance with NPDES permit limits for an entire calendar year and Silver awards are given for less than five permit excursions in an entire calendar year.

- The **Sheriff's Office** received dual re-accreditation awards from the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA) and the Virginia Law Enforcement Professional Standards Commission (VLEPSC). With these awards, the Sheriff's Office remains one of only 24 law enforcement agencies in Virginia to have earned and maintained international designation through CALEA and one of 82 agencies in the Commonwealth to have earned and maintained state accreditation through the VLEPSC. The Sheriff's Office also placed second in the National Law Enforcement Challenge Award program and won the Virginia Law Enforcement Challenge. The Law Enforcement Challenge program promotes professionalism in traffic safety enforcement and encourages agencies to share their best practices and programs with other law enforcement agencies throughout the nation. Agencies compete with other jurisdictions that have similar-sized organizations. The Sheriff's Office also was accredited by the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services as a Certified Crime Prevention Community. This is the second time the Sheriff's Office has received this designation. The Sheriff's Office is one of 13 Virginia jurisdictions that currently hold this designation.
- **Finance and Management Services** received a Distinguished Budget Presentation Award from the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) for the 20th consecutive year and the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting for its Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) for the 25th consecutive year.
- **County Administration** has guided Hanover County to its maintaining its Triple-AAA bond rating, the highest possible. In January 2011, Hanover County's 'Triple-AAA' rating status was affirmed by all three national bond rating agencies. We have become the smallest County, in terms of population, to be rated AAA by all three ratings agencies; the next smallest has 170,000 residents. Only 1.2% of county governments in the U.S. have three AAA bond ratings. There are now 36 Triple-AAA's out of 3,034 counties in the U.S.