

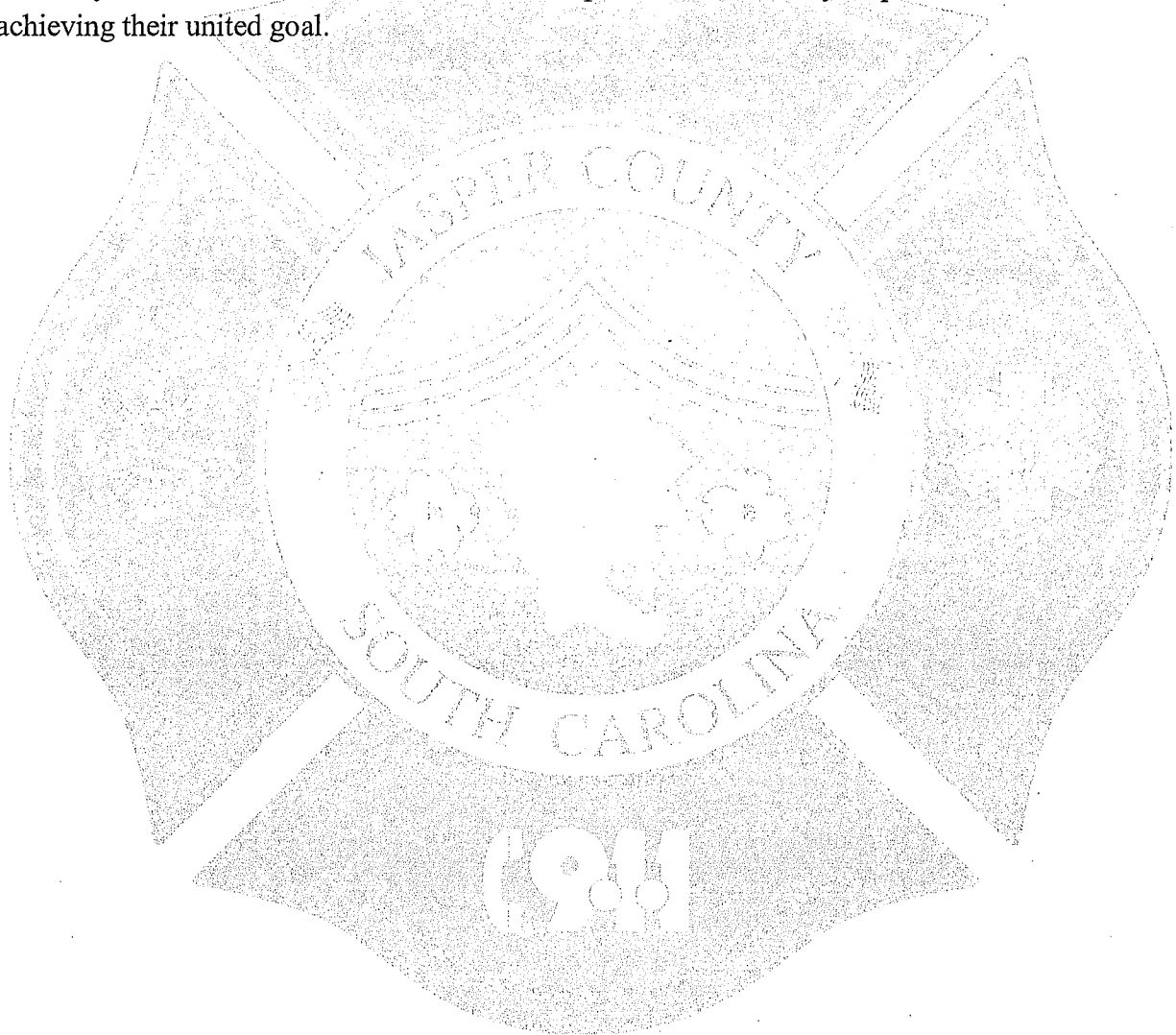
2015 JMGBL Awards Application

Submission Date	2015-08-13 10:19:48
This application is for:	J. Mitchell Graham Memorial Award
Project Title	Burning the Bridge of Adversity
County/Counties	Jasper County
Staff Contact	Wilbur A. Daley
Job Title	Director of Emergency Services
E-mail Address	jhaworth@scac.sc
Phone Number	843-726-7607
Please provide a summary of your entry (no more than 100 words) to be used in a handout for the awards competition and included in press releases/publications. You may either type the summary in the text box or upload it as an attachment below.	Please see attached summation
To upload your summary, please type "see attached" in the text box, then upload a Microsoft Word or PDF document below.	jasper summation.pdf
Presentations may include more than one speaker; however, each speaker should be aware that the 10-minute time limit is strictly enforced. Please list the name, title, and e-mail address of each speaker:	Wilbur A. Daley, Fire Chief, wilburd@jaspercountysc.gov Russell W. Wells, Deputy Fire Chief, rwells@jaspercountysc.gov Andrew Fulghum, County Administrator, afulghum@jaspercountysc.gov
Will any of the speakers need accommodations (wheelchair accessibility, etc.) during the awards competition?	No
To submit these attachments online, please upload Microsoft Word or PDF documents below.	jasper add'l materials.pdf jasper description.pdf jasper ltr of support.pdf

Burning the bridge of adversity
J. Mitchell Graham Memorial Award

APPLICATION SUMMATION

Jasper County's efforts over the years to reduce the fire ISO classification for its constituents encountered numerous and daunting challenges, accompanied by long-running complications related to delivery of services. Striking a balance between levying taxes and increasing effectiveness to unincorporated Jasper County; this monumental challenge faced long standing skepticism coupled with economic down turns. Jasper County Council in coordination with the County Administrator and Director of Emergency Services burned the bridge of adversity. Teamwork rose from the ashes like a phoenix. Their unity empowered their success in achieving their united goal.



J. Mitchell Graham Memorial Award

August 2, 2015

Jasper County

Presents

Burning the Bridge of Adversity



Burning the bridge of adversity
J. Mitchell Graham Memorial Award

1. The Benefit/Importance of the project

A. Why was this project undertaken?

Jasper County's efforts over the years to reduce the fire (ISO) classification for its constituents encountered numerous and daunting challenges, accompanied by long-running complications related to delivery of services. The dynamics of balancing levied taxes and increasing the effectiveness of service to unincorporated portions of Jasper County, coupled with economic trends and many years' skepticism over the perceived success of such an undertaking, presented the service with unique demands and unexpected confrontations; thus, Jasper County Council felt compelled to establish as an utmost priority the effort to achieve reduced ISO fire insurance classifications for its citizens and accordingly, reduced fire insurance premiums.

B. What is the significance of this project to your community as a whole? How does it relate in importance to the other problems in your community?

The significance of this project was hard-targeted by Jasper County Council, the county administrator and the director of Jasper County Emergency Services. The project's focal point sought to create a dynamic master plan for the Emergency Services Division as a whole, most importantly to deliver reduced fire insurance premiums to Jasper County's citizens. Our private residences and businesses had long endured increased fire insurance premiums and high millage rates. To bring remedy, and quickly, became the renewed and primary goal; moreover, it was thought that the need to revitalize the approach would encounter differing opinion from County Council, county administration, and the director of Emergency Services because repeated attempts had proved unsuccessful.

The revitalization of the plan hinged on evaluation of the current status of emergency services operations and brainstorming to come up with as unconventional an approach as possible. Jasper County Council had established a budgetary line item to conduct a fire study; however, Chief Wilbur Daley believed that he and his command staff were capable of reviewing deficiencies identified in past Insurance Services Office (ISO) classification reduction attempts and producing a viable dynamic master plan that would meet the challenge. In coordination with County Administrator Andrew Fulghum, Chief Daley set about to realign and foster the foundation of another approach to finding a solution.

To reiterate, while Jasper County Council wrestles with numerous challenges in the community, this challenge had been one of considerable long-standing. As mentioned, skepticism accompanied by high tension and mounting frustration because of past unsuccessful attempts to bring about relief caused staff to initially trouble-shoot at every planning session while seeing the project once more in the light of paramount importance.

C. How much of the county's population is benefited by the project? In what specific ways groups of citizens within the county better off than before?

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, Jasper County's population is 27,170 collectively. Subtracting the populus of the two municipalities within the county and the special fire district of the Levy Community, our project impacted approximately 17,170 directly. Moreover, Jasper

Burning the bridge of adversity
J. Mitchell Graham Memorial Award

County Emergency Services is a fire service organization providing emergency medical services (EMS) to all districts of the county. Jasper County Emergency Services employees are cross-trained in both fire suppression and EMS operations. This by default provides secondary benefits to those municipalities and special fire districts as well. Our project provided relief to approximately sixty-three percent (63%) of Jasper County. Including the secondary benefits to the other populus, this project impacted one hundred percent (100%) of the county.

D. What degree of success did the project attain? What major objectives were achieved?

While we assign a one hundred percent (100%) success rate in accomplishing the goals of our project, we unequivocally concede that there remains ample room for continued improvement of services. And while we lay out the project and the challenges in forthcoming sections of this presentation, our objective was and continues to be an appreciable reduction of constituents' fire insurance premiums, all the while maintaining or minimizing current fiscal tax burden and increasing county emergency services' effectiveness and efficiency of delivery.

2. Project Effort/Difficulty

A. What did your county have to do to accomplish its objectives?

The perceived monumental task to accomplish the objectives began with tearing down walls of skepticism and fostering a willingness on the part of everyone to work outside of what had become a customary comfort zone. First, the precedence of skepticism over past failures laid the foundation of the learning curve. While County Council had committed funds to conduct a fire study, they believed that this would identify any deficiencies of the current emergency services operations and provide remedy for meeting their priority in reducing fire insurance premiums. Chief Daley believed that the deficiencies identified in the previous ISO classification study would lend a solid foundation for the development of an effective, workable master plan. He diligently worked with County Administrator Fulghum in setting in motion the goal of devising a master plan in concert with the timing County Council had established. Chief Daley and his staff combed through the previous ISO study, and they sought to develop a work plan that not only focused on County Council's priority for fire insurance premium reduction, but also accomplished the by-product of improved cost effective and efficient services.

When Chief Daley presented the findings of his internal review to Administrator Fulghum, he presented the master plan, and from that format the two refined the plan. The master plan identified the establishment of water supply points, acquisition of additional fire apparatus (tankers) that are vital to move water from the supply points to incident locations, increased volunteer recruitment, retention, and training along with expansion and growth of the service as a whole. Additionally, the deployment of this plan called for the de-obligation of the funds set aside for the fire study as these funds would serve as the catalyst for the plan.

Secondly, County Councilmen Marty Sauls and Henry Etheridge, County Administrator Fulghum and Chief Daley agreed to drop titles and form a team player relationship, anchored in understanding and patience. Everyone would need to foster a harmonious problem-solving environment of profound professionalism in order to focus on the objectives. They needed to set aside their passion for performing in their respective positions and embrace differing points

Burning the bridge of adversity
J. Mitchell Graham Memorial Award

of view. And each of the four players was successful in achieving these prerequisite performance goals.

B. What challenges occurred during the project? Were there any community concerns?

The challenges encountered during this project were substantial; however, the cooperative and renewed spirit unified the vested parties and helped them to gain traction and positive momentum. Administrator Fulghum presented the plan to County Council, and that governing body conservatively evaluated the plan. Their primary concern – that of the cost of acquisition of five fire apparatus (tankers) – aligned with that of the county administrator and Chief Daley. This element of the plan was a steep one and appeared to present an expensive and inevitably increased tax burden upon our citizens. Council's view on acquisition of the required tankers was an opposing one when compared to what Chief Daley saw as the tactical and operational needs of the emergency services department.

Council's willingness to gain an understanding of core industry standards empowered Council and the administration to find common ground and allowed them to collectively work to devise a unified plan.

Initially, the estimate of acquisition for new apparatus was approximately a one million dollar investment. To realize this investment it appeared that Council would have to further burden the taxpayer with an estimated nine mill increase. And even if this were a viable option, state statute prohibits a mill increase exceeding five mills in a fiscal year, with the probability that the taxpayer would suffer an additional increase for two fiscal years. County Council realized that this portion of the plan would be impractical and would fail to meet the objective for obtaining immediate fiscal relief. When Council proposed acquiring tankers that were used in construction projects, it was proved a non-viable option in that ISO classifies a fire service tanker meeting the National Fire Protection Association standard. This standard requires a fire service tanker to have a pump that is capable of self-filling the tanker from a static water source.

Thus, the next exploratory ground was to search for used fire service tankers, but this option created a new challenge. Used tankers on the market are typically outside of the age standard for classification in ISO or were young enough to retain elevated values that made them cost-prohibitive. Moreover, purchasing used tankers now posed a unique challenge in that standardization of a fleet would require an increase in training of personnel for multiple variations in operations of a tanker, cost increases due to having different chassis and various maintenance requirements coupled with the need to have service parts for multiple apparatus readily available. Finance Director Ronnie Malphrus, along with Administrator Fulghum and in cooperation with County Council identified a small pot of money that would not create an undue burden upon the taxpayer and laid the foundation for Chief Daley to explore potential avenues in obtaining used tankers. With a budget now identified Chief Daley located a fire apparatus vendor that could fabricate a tanker apparatus meeting NFPA standards on used chassis. The manufacturer stated that it could locate used chassis that were nearly identical and fabricate the remainder of the fire apparatus to be standardized. The budget allotted for the acquisition of the five tankers was \$300,000.

Burning the bridge of adversity
J. Mitchell Graham Memorial Award

Chief Daley was able to work with the manufacturer and accomplish specifications for five tankers in the amount of 326,500. with a cost overrun that would require County Council's approval. The overrun would allow the manufacturer to build five tankers that would meet the minimum specifications of NFPA and meet operational needs for Jasper County Fire Rescue. Administrator Fulghum, Finance Director Malphrus, Chief Daley, and Council were able to realign budgets and cover the overrun without impacting county operations as a whole; moreover, this overrun did not result in a burden upon Jasper County taxpayers.

County Council realized the uniqueness of a purchase of this calibre and worked diligently with the county administrator and finance director to modify purchasing policy, whereby plans for this purchase to move forward were enabled; moreover, Council, realizing the potential impacts of the plan, de-obligated the fire study funds and allowed the administration to execute implementation of the master plan.

With the plan now gaining momentum, Chief Daley worked with an agricultural manufacturer to obtain decommissioned non-hazardous storage tanks, tanks that each would house twenty thousand gallons of water. The manufacturer was decommissioning seven tanks. ISO standards require a minimum quantity of thirty thousand gallons of available water at a water supply point, and this acquisition opportunity would allow for installation of three water supply points in the unincorporated portion of the county. A review of the nine unincorporated county stations found that two stations had distributed water supply systems available, three stations had water supply points meeting this standard already, and one fire station was within the five road mile radius of another fire station and would need to be relocated to close coverage gaps. The remaining three fire stations now became the focus of installing a water supply point.

What made the deployment of the plan critical was the cost effective approach that Chief Daley and County Administrator Fulghum devised. Chief Daley believed that he and his staff could perform the bulk of the work in-house, thus creating substantial savings to county taxpayers. Inevitably there would be outside business that would have to be contracted to complete some of the work, but those costs would be negotiated. The installation of the water supply points needed improvements that included drilling of supply wells to maintain the tanks full, minor repairs for leaks and modifications to close tank openings and fabrication of a distribution system to allow for expeditious filling of apparatus in response to an incident. The cost of a new twenty thousand gallon tank was estimated to be approximately \$20,000. each. The acquisition of the used non-hazardous tanks saved the taxpayers an estimated \$136,000. Cost estimates were not available for a contractor to build a water supply point; however, given the savings in material alone, it is believed there were considerable overall savings to the taxpayer.

County Administrator Fulghum, Chief Daley and the director of the county public works division worked together to send heavy equipment and a tractor trailer to load, transport, and unload the acquired tanks, resulting in further and substantial savings to our citizens.

Chief Daley and his staff utilized established business relationships within the community to build out the necessary infrastructure to meet the water supply point needs. Chief Daley reached out to Beaufort-Jasper Water and Sewer Authority (BJWSA) to obtain

Burning the bridge of adversity
J. Mitchell Graham Memorial Award

decommissioned hydrants. The hydrants were no longer viable for use in a distributed water system, and BJWSA did not hesitate to lend its support to Jasper County's mission. BJWSA donated the hydrants, and considering the cost of one unit when new and adding the cost of its installation, the estimated cost is \$5,000 per. By completing the work in-house it is estimated that taxpayers were additionally saved \$15,000. Local welder/fabricator Chuck Taylor performed fabrication and repair work at a substantially reduced cost and offered Jasper County a zero dollar mark-up on his materials.

With the Council approving and supporting the plan Chief Daley and his staff moved forward with their mission to recruit volunteers. Staff deployed for community and public events also set up a booth during coverage to recruit members of the community with the volunteer commitments varying from volunteer firefighter to auxiliary support membership. This was a revised approach to increasing available personnel to respond to incidents, and recruitment and retention of volunteers have met with substantial success.

When the substantial cost savings from the in-house work resulted in left-over monies from the fire study budget, Chief Daley and his staff identified the potential to tackle another deficiency identified in the ISO study – the training of newly recruited volunteers that was integral to the success of the plan. In order to accomplish this, a training center would need to be constructed. Chief Daley has 29 instructors on staff, in-house instructors who teach certification courses to all staff of the organization as well as to personnel of outside agencies. This afforded Jasper County the opportunity to bring new volunteers into the organization and the capability of providing them all requisite training to meet national, state, and departmental standards for performance as a firefighter, medical responder, or driver/operator. And progress with this training continues today.

Chief Daley and his staff identified a centralized fire station that had enough property to accommodate the construction of a training center. Collaboration with County Council saw the release of the remaining funds to allow for the center's realization, and again Chief Daley and his staff were able to accomplish the construction project in-house. Working with local propane supplier Amerigas produced support for the mission of building a training facility and providing a propane tank and propane for the construction of fire props. Emergency Services staff acquired intermodal connex boxes that met the standard for constructing a class 'B' burn building and satisfying the requirements of ISO for a training center. A combination of the remaining funds of the fire study, grant funding and realignment of inter-departmental budgets saw the building out of the facility become reality. For the record, training center construction projects range from the extremely conservative figure of \$160,000. into the millions. Based upon the current investment, it has been estimated that taxpayers were left unburdened by approximately \$130,000. because county staff were able to complete the project in-house, and adding to that, the welcome knowledge that the project met success without creating additional tax liabilities.

C. What were the nature and extent of the county government's efforts to alleviate the problem(s)? How difficult was it to accomplish the project's goals and/or objectives?

As stated earlier in this narrative, the difficulties encountered had become tedious as each division had to set aside former feelings of skepticism and animosities. Although, everyone

Burning the bridge of adversity
J. Mitchell Graham Memorial Award

appeared to be on common ground as to the course of the mission undertaken, the profound differing of opinion to achieve success had created adversity and an impasse that at first seemed insurmountable. Everyone's desire to succeed led to an open and honest discussion whose result established a willingness to unite and transition to a more collectively and consciously goal-oriented attitude. Proceeding from a somewhat non-traditional beginning, everyone had to listen and comprehend the challenges encountered divisionally. By creating a unified approach and developing a dynamic master plan with momentum, county personnel were excited at the thought of taking the mission to success, not only for themselves but for county citizens, too.

In summation, however simplistic the efforts described in this narrative may tend to appear, the inter-workings of many individuals and thinking platforms made possible what so many times had seemed improbable. County Council, the county administrator and fire chief identified a mandate to lower fire insurance premiums for our citizens with everyone paying close attention to skepticism on the part of many and the failures of the past. Everyone came to recognize that being successful with this particular project would require a non-traditional approach. Chief Daley and his staff crafted a master plan for the County Emergency Services Division, later refined with the help of the county administrator. County Administrator Fulghum presented the plan to Council and facilitated their understanding, resulting in Council's endorsement of it. It was then realized that a creative approach was required to implement the plan, a novel one requiring "out-of-the-box" thinking on the part of each player, modifications to procurement policy and collaborative work style with an intended two-part result: reduction of the ISO rating and accordingly, reduced fire insurance premiums for county citizens.

D. Was financing the project an obstacle? Were there any unusual factors inherent in financing the project?

Financing the project with taxpayer dollars was not an option. Our citizens were financially incapable of funding an increased tax liability. Utilizing existing funds, realigning monies, modifying budgets, and capitalizing on in-house personnel desires to get the job done with the capabilities they had to offer resulted in the success of the project.

E. Did any agencies, citizen groups, or other organizations assist your county with this project? Did their participation pose any particular challenges or offer any unique contributions or benefits?

Jasper County utilized working relationships with local business partners to help achieve the success of its project. These business partnerships allowed for donated goods and reduced costs of service. Again, Beaufort-Jasper Water and Sewer Authority donated decommissioned fire hydrants to assist in the construction of water supply points. Chuck Taylor completed welding and fabrication work on the water supply points at substantially reduced labor costs and zero dollar mark-up for materials. Amerigas donated a propane supply tank and propane for the training center.

The benefits afforded by the commitment on the part of each resulted in substantial cost savings for county taxpayers. Their level of commitment was offered without hesitation,

Burning the bridge of adversity
J. Mitchell Graham Memorial Award

and they continue to offer profound support in our mission to grow in service to our communities.

F. Are there any unresolved problems or other goals left to tackle?

The master plan has identified several construction projects, fleet enhancements, and increased service capabilities. Presently, we have achieved the primary goal in reducing fire insurance premiums for our citizens. We strive to seek continued progress and further enhancements of service with minimal impacts on tax liabilities, if any.

3. Project Originality/Innovation

A. Justify the uniqueness of this project. What makes it different from other projects designed to achieve the same objective?

Jasper County believes the uniqueness of this project to be original. We are not able to think of any other organization that has accomplished the kind of success we achieved with a zero tax liability to its constituents; moreover, we label as outstanding the ability of our divisions of governmental structure to overcome walls of skepticism, adversity, and impasse in order to collaborate in a unified manner to tackle a long-standing challenge plaguing our citizens. We lowered our citizens' fire insurance premiums with profound minimal investment. This investment established water supply points, acquired five refurbished/manufactured fire apparatus (tankers), increased volunteer compliment of staffing levels and constructed a training facility for use by newly acquired volunteers. The investment made was approximately \$361,500. Jasper County estimates the cost savings to its taxpayers to be in excess of one \$1 million. Again, this was accomplished with a zero additional tax liability.

B. Do you know of any other similar programs in South Carolina? If so, how is your program different?

Jasper County is not aware of any similar programs that have accomplished, with such a minuscule investment, the totality of its project's success.

C. What innovations were required in accomplishing your objectives?

Our constituents capitalized on the commitment of their fire service's willingness to undertake monumental projects – projects whose sole purpose is enhancing the delivery of service while increasing cost effectiveness and efficiency. The County Council, county administrator and fire chief overcame profound indifference and united to create fiscal relief without imposing tax liability. County Council, the administrator and finance director worked together to modify county purchasing policy to allow for non-traditional purchasing methods.

D. Who provided the creativity and imagination in your project?

The creativity and imagination for Jasper County's project were the result of the collaboration of Jasper County Councilmen Sauls and Etheridge, County Administrator Fulghum and Fire Chief Daley. Each of these divisions of government offered input that proved invaluable as the group cohesively crafted a successful project outcome.



Mon, 05/04/2015 - 3:50pm

Reduced ISO means big savings

Fire-Rescue, county now Class 4 in fire protection

By: Genelle B. Williams

County residents can expect to see lower fire insurance policy rates this summer.

Jasper County Fire-Rescue, with assistance from Jasper County Council, has reduced Jasper's ISO Public Protection Class (PPC) from a split 5/9 rating to a Class 4.

According to Fire-Rescue, as of June 1, all residents within five miles of a JCFR station will have a PPC of 4, meaning residents will pay lower rates for fire insurance.

"We are all excited that we received the PPC rating of 4. This is a great accomplishment for our organization," Chief Wilbur Daley said. "Everyone played a part in the new rating and it can be best described as a team effort."

County Council was set to hold a special meeting Monday to present the new ISO rating to residents.

The ISO (Insurance Services Office) is the agency that regulates the fire insurance rates for the nation.

The ISO rating scale measures Class 1 through Class 10, with Class 1 being the best and Class 10 the worst.

The office evaluates engines, tankers, and personnel, and looks over three years of records pertaining to annual ladder testing, annual pump testing, annual hose testing, business inspections, public education, dispatch, training, and more.

Fire-Rescue said the county had an ISO evaluation performed in 2009 and received a split class rating of 5/9. The rating meant that if a residence was within five miles of a fire station and within 1,000 feet of a certified water source, the insurance rating was a Class 5.

If the residence was within five miles of a fire station, but out-

side of the 1,000 feet of a certified water source the rating was a Class 9.

Fire-Rescue said under the new rating, if a residence is outside of the five miles of a fire station the rating will remain a Class 10.

The county received the new rating in large part thanks to receiving new tankers.

County Council provided \$326,750 to purchase five tankers, which will allow the department to shuttle water to fight structure fires.

The five tankers will be placed in stations that currently do not have tankers: Station 30 (Ridgeland County), Station 44 (Robertville), Station 46 (Fire Tower Road), Station 31 (Coosawhatchie), and Station 33 (Point South).

The additional tankers will bring the county's fleet to eight.

Each truck carries 2,000 gallons of water and has a 500-gallon per minute pump.

Extra cash in the wallet

Here are some examples of how residents will see savings:

- Fire-Rescue said under the new Class 4 rating, a home appraising at \$230,000 in the Fire Tower Road Area will save homeowners approximately \$863.92 per year on insurance costs.

The previous Class 10 rating cost around \$1,655.10 in annual premiums and Class 5 cost around \$817.08 in annual premiums. The Class 4 rating should cost homeowners around \$791.18 in estimated annual premiums.

- A \$300,000 (frame construction) home built in 2014 on Knowles Island Road cost \$1,623 in annual premiums under the previous Class 9 rating.

The new Class 4 rating will cost an estimated \$1,209 in annual premiums, saving homeowners approximately \$414 per year on insurance cost.

- A home appraised at \$689,000 (frame construction) on Knowles Island road had an annual premium costing \$6,998 per year under the Class 9 rating.

The new class 4 rating will cost around \$4,128 in estimated annual premiums, saving the homeowner approximately \$2,870 per year on insurance cost.

"This effort to lower the Public Protection Class for the residents of Jasper County has been an important issue for Jasper County Council as well as Jasper County Fire Rescue, and has been a great undertaking by both parties," The Fire Rescue said in a press release. "Jasper County Fire Rescue has also been working to establish water points in areas of our fire district to assist with the ability to obtain water without having to travel long distances to fill the tankers and return to the fire scene."

Certified water points must be a pond or tanks that will hold 30,000 gallons of water or more, and must maintain this amount during dry seasons.

All stations, except the Point South and Ridgeland County locations, now have a 30,000 gallon water source using tank forms.

"We worked hard to make this happen and will continue to strive to become a better resource for the citizens of Jasper County," Chief Daley said.

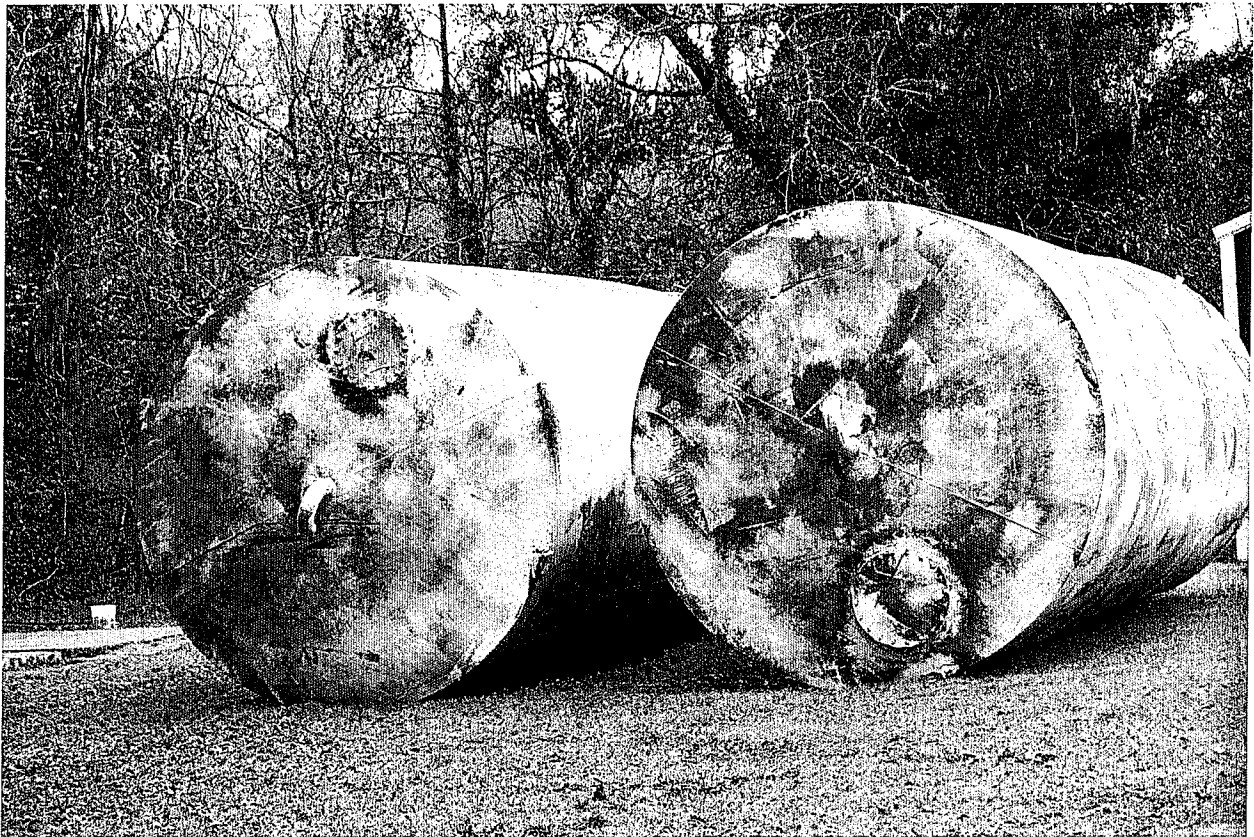
Burning the bridge of adversity
J. Mitchell Graham Memorial Award



Burning the bridge of adversity
J. Mitchell Graham Memorial Award



Burning the bridge of adversity
J. Mitchell Graham Memorial Award





OFFICE OF THE JASPER COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

358 Third Avenue – Courthouse Square – Post Office Box 1149
Ridgeland, SC 29936 – 843-717-3690 – Fax 726-7800 – TDD 726-7519

Andrew P. Fulghum

County Administrator

afulghum@jaspercountysc.gov

June 25, 2015

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

RE: LETTER OF SUPPORT / J. MITCHELL GRAHAM MEMORIAL COMPETITION

On behalf of Jasper County, I am honored to provide this letter of support addressing Jasper County's entry in the J. Mitchell Graham Memorial Competition 2015 – **“Burning the bridge of adversity”**

The record will speak loudly of the on-going work and results obtained by true teamwork among council members and staff.

It is hoped that this trail-blazing work, both safety-promoting in nature and cost-effective stewardship, will serve as an example for other counties in our state.

Sincerely,

Andrew Fulghum, ICMA-CM
County Administrator

APF/hej
enclosures