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Bexar County Office of Emergency Management Receives Award for Excellence

On April 20, 2021, the Bexar County Office of Emergency Management (OEM) received the Excellence in Emergency Management Award from the Emergency Management Association of Texas (EMAT). The virtual ceremony was part of EMAT's annual symposium, held entirely online this year because of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

The award itself had a focus on Bexar County's response to the pandemic and how local resources were deployed. Mark Chadwick, Emergency Management Specialist, and Scott Lampright, Assistant Emergency Management Coordinator, accepted the award on behalf of Bexar County OEM.

The Award for Excellence in Emergency Management is one of 10 different categories recognized by EMAT. While more than one agency can receive an award in some categories, the Excellence Award is granted to only one district organization. In its award program and the nomination guidance EMAT states, "This award recognizes outstanding state and local emergency management programs, projects, activities and campaigns that further the goals of saving lives and protecting property by mitigating, preventing, preparing for, responding to, or recovering from disasters and emergencies in Texas."

One particular operation conducted by Bexar County OEM in 2020 received great interest. It was a hybrid drive through and walk-up (COVID-19) testing system, utilizing an AM radio transmitter to inform citizens when it was their turn to be tested. This innovative approach allowed people to maintain social distance in their vehicles and prevented large numbers of people from waiting in long lines in the heat.

EMAT Awards Committee Chair Brian Murray said, "Your leadership, in your community and statewide, is an important reason why this state is consistently able to face adversity and come back strong. With this award, we acknowledge your contributions and express the gratitude of the emergency management community for your service."

Chris Lopez, Bexar County Emergency Management Coordinator, said, "I am happy to see the hard work and dedication of our team here at the Office of Emergency Management acknowledged. Recognition from our peers carries a high level of prestige and motivates us to maintain the highest standards in fulfilling this important mission."

County Commissioner Justin Rodriguez stated, "Our Emergency Management team is such a great asset for the citizens of Bexar County. They are hard workers, who fulfill their often difficult and taxing mission with dedication. I am happy to see them recognized with the Excellence in Emergency Management Award."

Information about Bexar County OEM, volunteer opportunities, and personal disaster preparation are available at <https://www.bexar.org/672/Emergency-Management> .

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