

HAZUS User of the Year!

2007 Fourth Quarter



Congratulations to Rick Burgess, the 2007 4th Quarter HAZUS User of the Year! Mr. Burgess is the GIS Planner for the City of Punta Gorda and the Florida HAZUS User Group (FLHUG) President. Mr. Burgess is the main proponent for the entire HAZUS program in Florida. He began to use HAZUS in 2004 following Hurricane Charley. This devastating hurricane pushed the state of Florida to incorporate mitigation measures and estimate potential losses from floods and hurricanes. Mr. Burgess recognized the power of HAZUS at that

time, and with the help of FEMA Region 4 and other GIS professionals, formed the Florida HAZUS User Group, which now has seven regional chapters and an organizational structure that includes four committees.

Rick Burgess promoted the use of HAZUS to other GIS professionals in the state by organizing and teaching regional HAZUS training classes. Mr. Burgess is a FEMA authorized HAZUS vendor for the hurricane model. He recognized that for HAZUS to be adopted throughout the state of Florida and for the emergency management community to use the tool to its full potential, training was the place to start. In addition to promoting HAZUS to his GIS peers throughout the state of Florida, Mr. Burgess has worked with the HAZUS software developers to incorporate Level 2 critical infrastructure data into the program for the entire State.

In addition to organizing and teaching HAZUS courses, Mr. Burgess has organized many HAZUS User Group meetings and presented HAZUS at multiple conferences. Mr. Burgess and the FLHUG were recognized at the 2007 National HAZUS User Conference with an award for "Organization and Data Management." The FLHUG was recognized for its innovative user group organization and data management practices related to cooperating to update GIS data used for mitigation and damage analysis.

Mr. Burgess's drive, vision, patience and perseverance made the Florida HAZUS User Group a reality. FEMA recognizes Rick Burgess as a Champion and true supporter of HAZUS through his dedication and hard work in Florida.

Congratulations!



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