



### NEWS RELEASE November 20, 2013

#### City Receives Statewide Award of Excellence for Listos (Ready) Program

The City of Santa Maria has been honored with a 2013 Helen Putnam Award for Excellence by the League of California Cities, for its innovative *Listos* program that teaches disaster preparedness. Fire Chief Dan Orr received the award on the City's behalf at the November 19<sup>th</sup> City Council meeting, with 20 *Listos* graduates in support.

The Helen Putnam Award for Excellence program recognizes outstanding achievements and innovative solutions by City governments to improve the quality of life in their communities in the most effective manner possible.

*Listos* (Spanish for "Ready") is a 12-hour Spanish language disaster preparedness program, taught in three-hour segments over four weeks. Since its inception in Santa Maria in January of 2011, *Listos* has trained more than 500 non-English speaking individuals in disaster preparedness techniques. The Orfalea Foundation has seen the success of the program and has begun to implement it in Imperial County and in the City of Salinas. PG&E has also seen the value and is sponsoring programs in different parts of the State. FEMA representatives recently contacted the originator of the curriculum and are exploring the idea of adding it to their list of emergency preparedness classes, which would push *Listos* to the national stage.

The *Listos* program utilizes information from Community Emergency Response Training (CERT) while focusing on low-cost to no-cost preparedness tips that serve participants not only during disasters, but also in the course of their everyday lives.

This is the fifth time that the City has been honored with the Helen Putnam Award for Excellence. Previous City program recipients were the Rotary Centennial Park and Robin Ventura Field in the category of Health and Wellness Programs (2007), the Non-hazardous Hydrocarbon Impacted Soils program in the category of Internal Administration (2005), Families for the First Decade Project in the category of Enhancing Public Trust, Ethics, and Community Involvement (2003), and the City's Fiscalization of Land Use Model, in the category of Financial Management and Planning (2000).

Questions may be directed to the City Manager's Office, 925-0951 ext. 372.

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