



**ST. JOHNS COUNTY  
FIRE RESCUE**  
3657 Gaines Rd.  
St. Augustine, Florida 32084

**For Immediate Release**

Date: 3/10/2013

Time: 10:00 am

Incident Type: Special Recognition

**SJCFR Awarded 2012 Beach Patrol of the Year**

St. Johns County Fire Rescue (SJCFR) Marine Rescue Division has been awarded the 2012 Beach Patrol of the Year, the highest honor given by the Florida Beach Patrol Chief's Association (FBPCA). This award is given only to the best agencies in our field, and its receipt places SJCFR in the highest caliber of beach patrol agencies in Florida. Some past recipients of the Beach Patrol of the Year include: Miami-Dade County, Palm Beach County and Sarasota County.

The FBPCA was established in 1983 and is comprised of Ocean Rescue agencies across the state of Florida. The primary function of this agency is to promote water safety to the beach going citizens. They achieve this goal through proactive public education, media interaction and lifeguard competitions held throughout the year.

Beach Patrol of the Year recipients are chosen based on numerous criteria such as; yearly goals and objectives, employment requirements, training programs, public safety initiatives as well as contributions to ocean lifesaving. One of the highlights for SJCFR during the past year included our continued development of the 1670 Marine Rescue Operations Plan. In 2012, we set a goal to expand this program not only within our own Department, but also across Northeast Florida. As the 1670 program has evolved we have been contacted by numerous surrounding agencies with requests to assist and develop similar water rescue programs for both Fire Rescue Departments and in Lifeguard only agencies. During 2012, we taught portions of this program to the following regional agencies: Jacksonville Fire & Rescue, Putnam County Fire Department, Flagler County Fire Rescue, Nassau County Fire Rescue, Mayport Naval Station, St. Johns County Sheriff's Office, City of St. Augustine Fire Department and the United States Coast Guard. Our goal in sharing this program with surrounding agencies is to create a framework for a unified response to water rescue emergencies for the Northeast Florida region.

SJCFR Marine rescue is responsible for all aquatic related emergencies occurring in SJC. This includes 42 miles of coastline, the intercoastal waterway and the St. Johns River. The primary objective of this first response service is to provide the highest level of skilled and efficient response to all people or situations requiring aquatic intervention. In 2012, SJC Marine Rescue saw a total of 1,617 emergency responses on our beaches. Of those responses, we rescued 282 people from hazardous rip currents and dealt with 225 traumatic injuries on the beach.

SJCFR will be presented with this award during the annual FBPCA and USLA Southeast regions Awards Banquet which will be held on Saturday, March 16, 2013 at 7pm at the Historic Casa Monica resort in Downtown St. Augustine.

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For more information please contact Jeremy Robshaw SJCFR Public Information Officer at (904) 209-1750

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