



Leaders at the Core of Better Communities
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2011 Annual Awards Program

Program Excellence Awards Nomination Form

Deadline for Nominations: March 11, 2011

Complete this form (sections 1 and 2) and submit with your descriptive narrative.

SECTION 1: Information About the Nominated Program

Program Excellence Award Category (*select only one*):

- ☒ Community Health and Safety
☐ Community Partnership
☐ Community Sustainability
☐ Strategic Leadership and Governance

Name of program being nominated: Cross Keys Water Project

Jurisdiction(s) where program originated: Doylestown Township

Jurisdiction population(s): 18,715

Please indicate the month and year in which the program you are nominating was fully implemented. (Note: All Program Excellence Award nominations must have been fully implemented by or before January 31, 2010, to be eligible. The start date should not include the initial planning phase.)

Month: December Year: 2010

Name(s) and title(s) of individual(s) who should receive recognition for this award at the ICMA Annual Conference in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, September 2011. (Each individual listed MUST be an ICMA member to be recognized.):

Name: Stephanie J. Mason

Title: Township Manager Jurisdiction: Doylestown Township, PA

Name: Dana Cozza

Title: Township Manager Jurisdiction: Buckingham Township, PA

Problem Assessment, the challenge or need:

Doylestown Township is located in Bucks County, Pennsylvania. Our mission is to protect the Health, Safety and Welfare of our residents. We achieve this mission through a myriad of different programs and services. One of the most important factors in protecting the health of our 18,715 residents is to provide safe and clean drinking water to the customers in Doylestown Township Municipal Authority (DTMA), which provides public water to nearly 2,500 households in the DTMA coverage area.

The project we would like to nominate for the Community and Safety Award is the Cross Keys Water Project, which turned into a multi municipal project. This project has allowed residents and business owners of the involved municipalities in Bucks County to enjoy clean water for the first time in 30 years. Under the administrative efforts of the DTMA who participated with Buckingham, Doylestown, and Plumstead townships and the state Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), the Authority was able to extend its public water lines to about 111 properties in the Cross Keys neighborhood, where residential and business owners have been forced to use bottled water and carbon filters for the past few 30 years.

The project problem that prompted the DTMA and the Township to create the Water Project stemmed from ground water pollution throughout the Cross Keys neighborhood. DEP officials had been monitoring the water in the Cross Keys area for more than 30 years. Residents and businesses had to maintain Carbon Filters and supply bottled water for their daily needs. A long term solution sought. Extinction of the DTMA water system, while expensive, was believed to be the best solution even though

running a water line to that area would cost over \$2 million dollars. Random tests by the DEP found tetrachloroethylene (also known as perchloroethylene, or PCE), dichloroethylene, and dioxane in ground water in May 2008. Although no residents reported health issues because of the water, the federal Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry says that exposure to high concentrations of PCE can be dangerous. The manmade chemical, used primarily for dry cleaning and metal degreasing, can cause dizziness, headaches, sleepiness, confusion, nausea, difficulty in speaking and walking, and even death.

Program implementation and costs:

Doylestown Township and DTMA knew that they needed to solve this problem for the residents, and the residents of the adjacent municipalities who were also affected. Richard John, the Executive Director of DTMA knew that he needed to bring the municipalities and their stakeholders together in order to leverage support for the project. He and Stephanie Mason ICMA CM, Doylestown Township Manager, sought funding and held meetings to get the parties working together, which resulted in \$2 million grant through DEP's hazardous sites cleanup program. The total project cost was budgeted at \$2.8 million and came in at \$2.76 million when completed in 2010. The grant funded the first 2 million and benefitting commercial property owners are required to close the remaining \$800,000 funding gap. Residential properties with severely polluted water were provided with a FREE connection to the extended water system thanks to the DEP grant funding.

Seeing that this project could mitigate a decades old groundwater pollution problem for their residents the townships signed inter municipal agreements naming Doylestown Township as the lead agency and authorizing the Doylestown Township Municipal Authority to construct the project, acquire the necessary easements, and operate the completed water system. DTMA began bidding the construction project in April 2010. The project was built through the spring months and Residents, township officials, and guests gathered in Doylestown Township at the end of June to celebrate the successful partnership that brought about the public water project. In keeping with the theme, the “Boiling on the Boulevard” event featured boiled hot dogs and iced tea prepared with the now drinkable water, and by December 2010 most properties had connected to the new line.

It took the combined effort to bring the project to reality: DTMA and PA DEP put up the money, the authority designed, constructed operates and owns the system, and residents and business owners had to agree to participate. The commercial property owners were very supportive and enthusiastic because they would no longer have to worry about filters and using bottled water to serve their families, customers and employees. To control costs, the water lines were run through back yards to avoid the cost of restoring state roads. The property owners granted the necessary easements sometimes just as the construction crews arrived! DTMA employees literally walked the water main route with property owners on a daily basis making adjustments as needed! Everyone saw the long-term benefits and came together to make this project happen.

The three municipal entities and their leaders came together to look through past the municipal boundaries, and cooperate to make this project succeed!

Tangible Results:

- Provided safe potable water to 111 properties in the Cross Keys Area
- Alleviated a long term problem of polluted wells and water in our area
- Allowed existing property owners and those yet to come to have a safe water supply which maintains their lives and businesses

Lessons Learned:

- *Engaging Stakeholders creates buy in and a more successful project:*

The project kicked off with the townships declaring mandatory connections for residents because of DEP's determination of groundwater contamination in the Cross Keys Area. Instead of forcing the residents to comply with a governmental mandate, Doylestown Township hosted two public meetings with stakeholders involved in this project. They educated residents about the grant funding available, and got the commercial properties on board as well. They explained the dangers of the contamination, and the urgency to strike while the iron was hot in order to receive the funding. This method of engaging residents, municipal and commercial leaders and the contractor to understand the project goals and to participate contributed greatly to the success of the project. The project saw the installation of over 18,000 linear feet of water line in less the 120 days!

- *Working cooperatively helps foster success*

This project would never have been possible at no cost to residents if not for the collaborative efforts of the a Manager and Elected officials of Doylestown Township, the Executive Director of DTMA and the Board Members, Buckingham Township and Plumstead Township as well as DEP and local commercial property owners. Working together made it possible to fix a very long term problem. We hope that other municipalities struggling with similar issue will view the success of this inter municipal project and realize there may be a creative way for them to recreate a similar program with their neighbors.