



Roanoke County Fire & Rescue Department News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Roanoke County Fire & Rescue Receives Governor's Award

Award given for outstanding response to the Green Ridge Mountain Fire last year

February 23, 2009 (ROANOKE COUNTY) -- Roanoke County Fire and Rescue Department received the Governor's 2008 Virginia Fire Service Award-Outstanding Fire Department Response for their efforts to extinguish the Green Ridge Mountain Fire last February. The award was presented to the department Saturday, February 21 during the opening ceremony of the 2009 Virginia Fire Chiefs Association's Mid-Atlantic Expo & Symposium in Virginia Beach.

The department was selected because of their outstanding response to the Green Ridge Mountain Fire, including their swift enactment of the state-wide mutual aid system, ability to integrate multiple system components, and capability to manage interagency interfacing and cooperation on a large scale incident.

The Green Ridge Mountain Fire began on Sunday, February 10, 2008 as a result of high winds that leveled power lines and fanned the flames. Parts of Interstate 81 in Roanoke County had to be closed due to heavy smoke that dropped visibility to near zero. Shifting high winds, dry conditions, and steep, rocky terrain complicated the fire



During the first hours of the Green Ridge Mountain Fire parts of Interstate 81 in Roanoke County had to be closed due to heavy smoke that dropped visibility to near zero.

suppression efforts. Almost two weeks after the Green Ridge Mountain Fire started, fire crews were able to fully contain the fire and consider it under control.

Nearly 4,000 acres burned from Loch Haven Drive to Timberview Road to Carvins Cove Road. The Green Ridge Mountain Fire was the largest brush fire the department has ever battled. Fire crews were able to protect and save 64 structures at a value of more than 16.5 million dollars and in some cases fire came within 5 feet of these homes and structures. There was only one minor firefighter injury and one civilian car was lost.



The Green Ridge Mountain Fire scorched over 4,000 acres.

Roanoke County Fire and Rescue Department received assistance from many local and state agencies during the fire. Departments from within Roanoke County provided invaluable support in the Emergency Operations Center, including the Emergency Communications Center, Police Department, Information Technology, and Community Development.

Regional partners including Roanoke City, Salem, Botetourt County, and Elliston proved the strength of the regional cooperative effort throughout the duration of the fire. The state-wide mutual aid system was utilized and fire departments came from over 130 miles away. Additionally, the department received assistance from the Virginia National Guard, the Virginia Department of Forestry and the American Red Cross.

Local businesses and citizens assisted by supplying food, water, and even a command post from which fire crews worked. A tremendous effort was provided by all of the participants mentioned and certainly speaks to the strength of the department, community and the Commonwealth.



Photo by Jennifer Sexton

A local swim club provided their club room for fire officials to use as a command post.

On Thursday, February 28, 2008, Gov. Timothy M. Kaine held a news conference in Roanoke to thank the hundreds of firefighters, National Guardsmen, emergency service personnel,

businesses, organizations, churches and individuals who responded to the wildfires that burned across the Commonwealth from February 10 through the 17, including the Green Ridge Mountain Fire.



Photo by Jennifer Conley Sexton

Governor Timothy M. Kaine held a news conference on Thursday, February 28, 2008 to thank the hundreds of responders who assisted with wildfires that burned across the Commonwealth from February 10th through the 17th, including the Green Ridge Mountain Fire.

The Roanoke County Board of Supervisors will recognize Roanoke County Fire and Rescue Department for receiving the prestigious Governor's Fire Service Award at their 3 p.m. meeting on Tuesday, February 24.

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Roanoke County Fire and Rescue Department is committed to providing quality fire and emergency medical services to the citizens and visitors of Roanoke County, Virginia. We are a combination department with both career and volunteer personnel operating out of 12 stations and one administrative office.