State of Missouri
2012 Governor's Award for Quality and Productivity
Executive Summary

Team Name: Missouri StormAware

Nominator: Jerry Lee, Department of Public Safety Director

Nominating Department: Department of Public Safety –
[*Nominations must include names of all agencies/departments/organizations/businesses, etc.]*
[The Department of Public Safety is the nominating department. The nomination includes team members from the Department of Public Safety, Office of the Director and State Emergency Management Agency; and the Office of Administration, Information Technology Services Division.]

Category: Innovation

Executive Summary: [Executive summary page must be 12 points, Times New Roman font, and left justified. **Attach the executive summary to the front of the nomination**]

The Missouri Department of Public Safety (DPS), Missouri State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA) and Office of Administration Information Technology Services Division (ITSD) partnered to create the Missouri StormAware Web site (http://stormaware.mo.gov) to better educate Missourians about tornadoes and severe storms. All work was done in-house by existing staff. The team set out to rethink the way tornado and severe weather safety information is communicated to the public. For instance, the National Weather Service Central Region Service Assessment (report) following the May 22, 2011 EF-5 Joplin tornado included these findings:

- *For the vast majority of surveyed Joplin residents, the first risk signal for an imminent severe weather threat came via the local community siren system.*
- *Several of those interviewed expressed confusion associated with the single 3-minute siren alert, thinking the threat was over once the sirens had ceased.*
- *The majority of surveyed Joplin residents did not immediately go to shelter upon hearing the initial warning.*

The StormAware team also researched existing online tornado safety information and found it very limited and unlikely to stimulate viewers' interest. As a result, the StormAware Web site includes unique and professional quality videos that demonstrate the best way to take shelter in specific structures—houses, mobile homes, schools, etc. Videos feature experts that clearly explain why certain locations within a structure are safer than others. Videos point out common misunderstandings about tornado sirens and the importance of using weather alert radios to receive initial severe weather warnings and to understand when the threat has passed.

The team also wanted to ensure Missourians are aware of free severe weather alert services available for across the state so that they will be more prepared as storms approach. Through collaboration with local safety agencies and media outlets, a database of free severe weather text alert services was developed that appears on the Web site.

StormAware also makes it easy to distribute the valuable information presented on the Web site across the Internet. The project uses social media platforms, including YouTube, Vimeo, and Socrata's data sharing platform, allowing anyone to embed StormAware Web site content. Many organizations, including media outlets and emergency management agencies, have already embedded content.

In less than three months, there were more than 25,000 visitors to the StormAware site, the emergency alert texts data set had been accessed almost 60,000 times and the videos had been viewed more than 17,000 times.

Hopefully, the success of Missouri StormAware will result in fewer lives lost and fewer injuries suffered as a result of severe storms. We invite the GAQP team to review the http://stormaware.mo.gov Web site.

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NOMINATION FORM

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

Department: Department of Public Safety -

1. **Project or team name.** Missouri Storm Aware (http://StormAware.mo.gov)

2. **List the name of all team members, job titles, state agency department, and/or community organization.** [please list alphabetically by last name] Stephanie Bryan, Web Developer, Office of Administration ITSD; Steve Cusumano, Webmaster, Office of Administration ITSD; Tim Diemler, Deputy Director, State Emergency Management Agency (Missouri DPS); Heather Dolce, Communications Assistant, Missouri Department of Public Safety; Meggan Houts, Graphic Designer, Office of Administration ITSD; Yaryna Klimchak, Web Media Developer, Office of Administration ITSD; Jessica Lin, Web Media Developer; Office of Administration ITSD; Mike O'Connell, Communications Director, Missouri Department of Public Safety; Joey Pate, Web Developer, Office of Administration ITSD; Jonathon Steffens, Special Assistant Professional, Office of Administration ITSD.

3. **Describe the project** (*200 words or less*) **StormAware.mo.gov** is a new Web site to help inform and prepare Missourians for tornadoes and severe weather. It centers on detailed videos that show how to take shelter from severe weather in specific types of buildings, important information about tornado sirens and weather alert radios, and links to severe weather texting services, including free services for each county in the state, which alert Missourians to upcoming severe weather. The site aims to teach Missourians that they should use ***multiple*** sources for weather information to always be ***aware*** of impending severe weather—getting updates and alerts from several sources. From the outset, the site was designed so that additional videos and content could be added. Because of immediate interest from local television stations and others, a feature was added so that high resolution videos can be downloaded directly from the site and broadcast locally, or used for presentations. Following requests for brochures, a full color, downloadable StormAware brochure was created. Some local governments have also linked to the site or embedded StormAware videos into their own sites. We suggest exploring the site at http://stormaware.mo.gov to see how it works.

4. **Nomination category.**
(*Check only one*)

X INNOVATION

☐ CUSTOMER SERVICE

☐ EFFICIENCY / PROCESS IMPROVEMENT

☐ TECHNOLOGY IN GOVERNMENT

5. **Describe why you selected this nomination category.** While StormAware includes aspects of all award categories, it is fundamentally a new product that changes the way emergency managers educate the public about tornado and severe weather safety. Previously, Missouri's State Emergency Management Agency, FEMA and other states had relied upon very basic written instructions about what to do in the event of a tornado (and severe weather). StormAware was created to do a better job of engaging the public and communicating tornado safety measures by using videos featuring experts that take viewers into specific types of structures, show the best way to protect themselves, and explain why. The site also features direct links to weather alert text messaging for every county in Missouri, so that users can get free text messages about severe weather warnings. Within three months, there were more than 25,000 visitors to the site and the emergency alert texts data set had been accessed almost 60,000 times.

II. BACKGROUND

1. **When did the team begin its work?** December 2011.

2. **When did the team implement this project?** March 2012

3. **How long has the project been implemented?**

X 0 - 3 Months ☐ 4 – 6 Months ☐ 7 - 9 Months

☐ 10 – 12 Months ☐ 12 or more ☐ Completed

III. RESULTS/ACCOMPLISHMENT

1. **What did the team accomplish?** (*150 words or less*) The team wanted to create a new way of communicating storm safety information to engage the public in time for the prime tornado season of 2012. It researched existing severe weather safety sites, produced six videos that feature experts from the National Weather Service, local emergency management and response communities. Existing weather alert texting services were compiled and included in the site, allowing users in every Missouri county to sign up for emergency text and email alerts from local safety authorities and media outlets. In addition to creating a new Web site, the site was built so that its content could be acquired for additional uses—including allowing users to embed video into their own sites, download videos and graphics for local broadcasts, and downloading or embedding the dataset of text alerts. This provides a valuable web function for local safety agencies and media outlets without additional data management costs and which is already being widely utilized. All work on the site was done in-house, using existing equipment and resources.

2. **Which of the following describes the benefits of the accomplishment?** (Check all that apply and provide an explanation)

☐ cost reduction X time savings X increased effectiveness

X improved process ☐ other: describe

3. **Explain how the accomplishments of the team are beyond regular duties and responsibilities** (*150 words or less*). Following one of the deadliest years for tornadoes in Missouri and the U.S., DPS/SEMA conducted a review of existing online tornado and severe weather safety information along with Joplin tornado warning response actions by the public. It was decided that in addition to using videos, there should be a focused stand-alone, branded Web site. DPS/SEMA reached out to the National Weather Service, school, fire safety and emergency management officials to get them involved in the videos. DPS/SEMA and OA ITSD went into the field to shoot professional quality videos, which were also edited in-house. All graphics were created in-house. DPS also surveyed and compiled text alert warning systems for the entire state. Recognizing the need for this information to be fully accessible anywhere at any anytime, ITSD staff designed the site with mobile users in mind. Without creating a need for additional content management, the StormAware Web site is responsive to different devices and will load a layout optimized for mobile, tablet and desktop. Additionally, all content on the site is available for every device and operating system.

IV. MEASUREMENT/EVALUATION

1. **Describe how the success of the project was measured and what outcomes were achieved.** (description should not exceed *300-500 words)*.

Since launch, the Missouri StormAware Web site has provided valuable severe weather safety information to almost 25,000 site visitors. The database allowing users to find emergency alert systems in their county has been especially popular—the dataset has been viewed almost 60,000 times, and local agencies and media outlets have placed the dataset into their own sites using an embed code provided by the StormAware Web site, expanding the reach of Missouri StormAware.

StormAware's video content has also been very successful in educating the public about tornado safety. The six videos have been viewed a total of more than 17,000 times, and there have been requests for DVD and digital copies for local agencies and media outlets for local broadcasts and presentations. Local governments and agencies have linked to the site and embedded StormAware videos in their own sites. The Nebraska Emergency Management Agency has sought input from Missouri about creating a similar site. Wunderground.com, the second leading weather forecast Internet Web site, has sought permission to feature the StormAware videos on its site.

Missouri StormAware also includes a social media campaign reaching out to citizens, emergency responders and media outlets to further spread information about tornado safety. The StormAware Facebook page, through connections with fans and their friends and family, has amassed a potential audience of over 101,000 individuals, and the page has been responsible for roughly ten percent of traffic to the Web site. Using the hashtag #StormAware, the StormAware Twitter account has interacted with citizens, safety officials, meteorologists and media outlets to inform the public about the importance of tornado safety.

2. **Are the benefits derived from this project:** (Check only one.)

X Recurring ☐ One-time

3. **If recurring, how will the benefits be sustained?** (Explain in 150 words or less) The StormAware Web site is a permanent site. In addition to existing content, additional videos will continue to be added. The public can be alerted to new content through Facebook and Twitter, which are included in the site. The site features a "Contact Us" e-mail link that is regularly used by the public to ask questions or seek additional information.

   The database of text alert services is managed using data.mo.gov and can be easily updated and embedded into other Web sites, saving other agencies the time of aggregating and managing this data.

V. RECOGNITION/AWARDS

1. **Has this project ever been nominated for the Governor's Award for Quality and Productivity? If yes, when?** No.

2. **If yes, for which category was it nominated?** N/A

3. **Has this project received any other awards or recognition in the past? If yes, describe.** N/A

VI. NOMINATOR'S INFORMATION

NOMINATING DEPARTMENT

Name	Signature	Telephone Number	E-Mail Address
Jerry Lee, Director DPS		(573) 751-5432	Jerry.lee@dps.mo.gov

VII. DEPARTMENT COORDINATOR INFORMATION

DEPARTMENT

Name	Signature	Telephone Number	E-Mail Address
Mary Beckwith	Mary Beckwith	(573) 751-5424	mary.beckwith@dps.mo.gov

VIII. DEPARTMENT DIRECTOR APPROVAL

DEPARTMENT DIRECTOR'S NAME	DEPARTMENT DIRECTOR'S SIGNATURE*
Jerry Lee	

Nomination must be signed <u>ONLY</u> by the Department Director to be eligible for consideration. Nominations not signed by the Department Director will be returned to the agency coordinator.

2012 Governor's Award for Quality and Productivity
StormAware Supporting Documentation: Examples of entities utilizing StormAware content

1. St. Louis Post-Dispatch embedded three tornado safety videos into its Web site. Here is one example mobile home safety video embed: http://www.stltoday.com/news/multimedia/tornado-safety-for-mobile-homes---missouri-stormaware/youtube_961d0d14-6d0d-11e1-bdfd-0019bb30f31a.html
2. Campus Safety Web site embedded the video for tornado safety in schools: http://www.campussafetymagazine.com/Videos/Channel/Emergency-Management/2012/03/Tornado-Safety-at-School-Missouri-StormAware.aspx
3. Clinton County Emergency Management Agency embedded four videos and a link to the StormAware Web site (utilizing StormAware graphics): http://em.clintoncomo.org/the-state-of-missouri-has-publ/
4. Pacific Fire District, posted Missouri StormAware press release and Web site link: http://www.pacificfire.org/
5. Missionary Baptist State Convention of Missouri, embedded video in its Web site: http://www.mobaptistconvention.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=347:tornado-safety-place-of-worship-missouri-stormaware-&catid=81:news-and-updates&Itemid=152
6. Lexington Fire and Rescue, linked to Missouri StormAware Web site using StormAware graphics: http://www.lexingtonfire.net/Pages/default.aspx
7. Maysville R-1, linked to the StormAware Web site using StormAware graphics on its homepage: http://www.maysville.k12.mo.us/
8. Northeast Missouri community of Perry, in its daily weather forecast section, links to the StormAware Web site using graphics: http://perrymissouri.com/site_2012/
9. City of Excelsior Springs, article about Missouri StormAware and link to site: http://www.cityofesmo.com/
10. Henry County Health Center, posted press release about Missouri StormAware and link to site: http://henrycountyhealth.org/
11. St. Joseph Fire Department, includes Missouri StormAware under "links of interest": http://www.ci.st-joseph.mo.us/fire/emergencymanagement.cfm
12. Maryland Heights Fire District, Missouri StormAware logo, short article and link to site: http://www.mhfire.org/
13. Christian County Emergency Management, links to Missouri StormAware Web site: http://ema.christiancountymo.gov/
14. Avenue City School District linked to Missouri StormAware using graphics: http://www.avenuecityschool.org/vnews/display.v/ART/4f70a95d45bc6
15. City of Maryville, linked to Missouri StormAware Web site: http://www.maryville.org/pView.aspx?id=3026&catid=29
16. Mt. Vernon Police Department linked to Missouri StormAware utilizing site graphics: http://www.mtvernonmopd.org/page1.html
17. Northwest Missouri University, Missouri StormAware logo and link to site: http://www.nwmissouri.edu/police/emer/index.htm