



## Contra Costa County

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### NEWS RELEASE

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### **Contra Costa County's Department of Information and Technology**

#### **Wins 2019 Innovation Award for Emergency GIS Initiative**

(Martinez, CA) – Contra Costa County announced that the Department of Information and Technology won statewide recognition with the 2019 Innovation Award for Operational Effectiveness from the California County Information Services Directors Association (CCISDA) — the official organization of County IT Directors and Chief Information Officers throughout the state of California.

CCISDA awards three urban counties for Innovation and Excellence in Business Process, Collaboration, and Operational Effectiveness. This year's Operational Effectiveness Award recognized the Contra Costa County Regional Emergency Geographic Information System (GIS) Initiative that began in response to the Butte Fire during the 2015 California wildfire season. The award was presented to Marc Shorr, Chief Information Officer (CIO), and Isaac Cabrera, GIS Administrator for the County.

"We are proud of the Department of Information and Technology for the innovation and operational effectiveness award from their peers," said Board Chair, Supervisor John Gioia. "Contra Costa County prepares for emergencies, and teamwork proves key to develop effective responses and deliver a high level of service during incidents."

The Contra Costa County Regional Emergency GIS Initiative was a vision that resulted from the Department of Information and Technology's support of the Butte Fire. The GIS solution was to ensure that all first responders across the County could see and use the same GIS data and mapping tools when responding to emergencies.

The County IT Department's GIS team worked directly with the Contra Costa County Sheriff's Office, Office of Emergency Services, and the Emergency Operations Center to assess public safety needs in an emergency situation. This team developed an Environmental Systems Research Institute (ESRI) cloud-based application in the form of a dashboard. This dashboard shows "live" views of evacuation areas, County assets, power shutoff data, and disaster locations that Incident Command can use for coordination and decision-making.

During the recent fires, earthquake, and PG&E Public Safety Power Shutoffs, the Geographic Information System (GIS) team worked actively and collaboratively with the Contra Costa

County Emergency Operations Team, using this tool to ensure residents were well informed. The tool equipped internal County staff with information to help make decisions critical in sustaining County services and supporting cities and other jurisdictions to help residents.

During his acceptance speech for the award, the County's CIO Marc Shorr said, "I tell staff every day that we have a tremendous and rare opportunity to impact and make a difference for our departments, public safety, and the 1.1 million residents we serve through the use of technology."

Shorr expressed how proud he was of the strategic partnerships that have developed over the last year through use of GIS and this new mapping tool, and the opportunity of expanding the use of GIS to more partners in the County and statewide in the future.



Photo caption: Award-winning GIS data mapping tool helped County officials make critical decisions in the Emergency Operations Center in October 2019.

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