



News Release

PRESS OFFICE

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SBA Honors Fort Kent Town Manager Donald Guimond For Outstanding Disaster Recovery Efforts

ATLANTA—When heavy spring rains washed away the remains of a harsh winter’s 200 inches of snow in Aroostook County, Maine, the flooding St. John and Fish rivers surged at their junction—Fort Kent. As the floodwaters rose beyond the 25-foot flood stage on May 1, 2008, Town Manager Donald Guimond ordered mandatory evacuations, while city workers built temporary dikes to protect the downtown area.

Concerned that some Fort Kent residents, particularly the elderly, would not vacate their homes, Guimond and the fire chief went door-to-door to encourage those at risk to leave. Because of the town manager’s proactive efforts, no one died in the aftermath of the worst flooding in the town’s recorded history. As the waters receded, Guimond reassured the disaster victims by giving timely information about recovery resources. He also served as the link between the townspeople and the state and federal agencies providing assistance.

Guimond’s calm and effective leadership in the midst of a dangerous situation saved lives, protected the town of Fort Kent, and hastened the post-disaster recovery of the area. His exceptional efforts have earned him the ***2009 Phoenix Award for Outstanding Contributions to Disaster Recovery by a Public Official***.

“The Phoenix Award is an acknowledgment of an individual’s heroic work and a recognition of the contributions they make to the recovery of their communities,” said SBA Administrator Karen G. Mills. “Town Manager Guimond displayed tremendous courage and resourcefulness in the aftermath of the flood, and he exemplifies the spirit one must have to rebuild after a disaster like this.”

The Phoenix Award will be presented on May 19, 2009, during the U.S. Small Business Administration’s National Small Business Week celebration, May 17-23 at the Mandarin Oriental Hotel in Washington, D.C. Events can be viewed virtually through SBA’s free, live webcasting, which will be accessible at <http://www.nationalsmallbusinessweek.com/>. The site also includes additional information on National Small Business Week, including a detailed schedule and registration information.

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Since 1998, the SBA has given the Phoenix Award to business owners, public officials and volunteers who displayed courage, ingenuity and tenacity in the aftermath of a disaster, while contributing to the rebuilding of their communities.

The SBA makes low-interest, taxpayer-backed disaster loans to homeowners, renters, businesses and non-profit organizations of sizes. Additional information about the disaster assistance program is available at www.sba.gov/disasterassistance.

For more information about National Small Business Week, visit www.sba.gov/sbw.

The U.S. Small Business Administration thanks the cosponsors of National Small Business Week and related events: SCORE, Sam's Club, Symantec Corporation, Ford, Raytheon, Administaff, Visa, Sage, Trend Micro, Lockheed Martin, Moran Media Group, Dun & Bradstreet, the Small Business Entrepreneurship Council (SBEC), the National Association of Development Companies (NADCO), the National Association of the Self Employed (NASE), and the Association of Small Business Development Centers (ASBDC).

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