

Lake County Fire Rescue responded to more than 13,900 calls for service last year — a call every 37 minutes of its 24-hour operation.

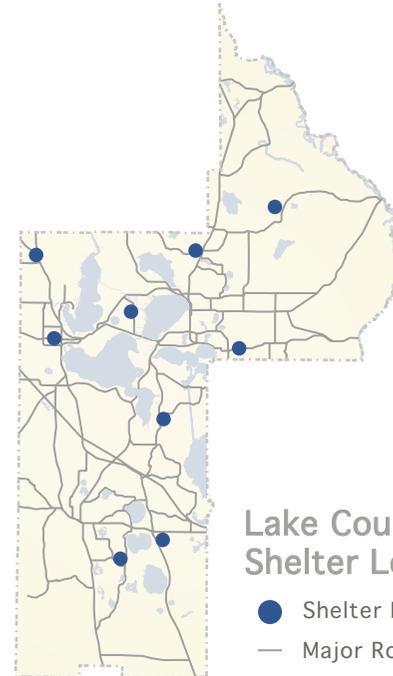


Universal *Response*

The Department of Public Safety received special recognition this year for achievements on behalf of its citizens. The awards highlighted a few of the many accomplishments of the Department's four divisions: Fire Rescue, Emergency Management, Communications Systems and Animal Services.

In June 2005, the National Association of Counties awarded Lake County for its *innovative* program to co-locate residents with their pets at public hurricane shelters. Following Hurricane Charley, the first major hurricane to sweep across Lake County in years, Animal Services rapidly developed a plan to set up pet-friendly shelters for residents reluctant to evacuate their homes without their pets. Less than a month after the first storm, Hurricane Frances hit, and the plan was put to the test. Overwhelmingly positive public response led to an expansion of the program, with two more pet-friendly shelters readied in time for Hurricane Jeanne. During Hurricane Frances, 180 pets were sheltered, and an additional 50 were sheltered for Hurricane Jeanne.

The *historic* hurricane season brought into focus the need for new procedures and technologies to help ensure public safety. Emergency Management made immediate improvements to its preparation and response plans for the 2005 hurricane season. Included were plans to add shelter space for citizens, increase the number of pet-friendly shelters, and provide faster and easier public access to vital information on the County Web site and through local media. Another project initiated this year was an emergency notification system designed to contact residents via telephone before, during and after events that



Lake County Shelter Locations

- Shelter Locations
- Major Roads

endanger life or property. The system is commonly referred to as reverse 9-1-1 and allows emergency officials to access the 9-1-1 database to contact entire communities quickly.

Lake County’s Fire Rescue Division made important *strides* this year providing exemplary fire protection service. The County’s rapid population growth prompted the most visible changes for the Department, including the addition of 21 firefighters, five tankers and a new pump truck. A new Fire Marshal/Fire Investigation Section was formed to oversee the inspections and investigative efforts of suspicious fire cases. The County also moved into the final design phase for construction of four new fire stations near Minneola, Lake Jewett, the Florida Turnpike/State Road 19 area and the Paisley/Lake Kathryn area to serve residents in the coming years.

The American Heart Association honored Lake County as a “Heart Ready County” for its pro-active program to place and track automated external defibrillators (*AEDs*) for public access, and for its *proactive* CPR/AED training program for County employees. Separately, the County was issued an improved fire protection rating by the Insurance Services Office (*ISO*). The ISO, which surveys properties to evaluate the fire protection capabilities of local governments, issues ratings used by insurance companies to assess commercial and residential fire risk. Lake County Fire Rescue was also honored by several local civic groups for its *service* to the community this past year.