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# Duane D. Pearsall of Colorado Named 1976 National SBA Person of the Year

Duane D. Pearsall, President of the Statitrol Corporation in Lakewood, Colorado, was named the 1976 National Small Business Person of the Year at an awards banquet which culminated the "National Small Business Week Salute to Small Business" activities at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Washington, D.C., recently. Pearsall, who was selected for the national honor from a field of 51 winners from all of the states and Puerto Rico by the U.S. Small Business Administration's National Advisory Council, was presented his award by SBA Administrator Mitchell P. Kobelinski.

A dynamic and visionary thinker, Pearsall has built a multi-million dollar company in which there is a direct and indisputable correlation between happy, involved people and profits. Pearsall's objective has been to make Statitrol, which developed and manufactures the SmokeGard early-warning fire detectors for homes and businesses, "an above average company employing above average people making above average wages while building life saving products." His credo has been "to build a successful business, one must build futures for the employees who are building the business."

Keys to Pearsall's success have been his ability to anticipate, understand, accept, and adapt to change, and sometimes even initiate it, and his keen awareness of the important interrelationship between a clean environment and the future of the free enterprise system. He has said, "I'm distressed by the negative attitude of many business owners regarding any new regulation affecting our society. Negative attitudes invite the media to place businesses in opposition to the citizens. Furthermore, we, America's small business community, need to accept changes with a positive attitude and make the best of them."

After eight years as a successful manufacturer's representative in the heating and air distribution industry, Pearsall started Statitrol in 1963 to manufacture static-control devices. The fact that smoke blocks an electrical

current flowing across an air gap in static control devices led him to pioneer in the development of ionization smoke alarms for home and business use.

Statitrol's battery-operated SmokeGard fire detector, which is no bigger than a large mug, attaches to the ceiling and sounds off at the first sign of fire. Introduction and acceptance of Pearsall's innovative product created a new commercial and home smoke alarm industry and paved the way for other companies to enter the field. The company, which has an excellent world-wide reputation, is continually receiving letters from persons who owe their lives to the SmokeGard device.

Statitrol's total sales volume for 1975 was over \$10 million. The company's only problem is that its production cannot keep up with the domestic and inter-

national demand for its product. As a result of Pearsall's brilliant leadership and enlightened view of capitalism, the company will nearly double in size this year and will no longer be considered a small business.

In his letter of congratulations to Pearsall, President Gerald R. Ford said, "Yours is an honor which is equalled by few others in its representation of the peak of success in the most important part of our economy, small business. It is truly awe-inspiring to realize that of the 9.8 million small business owner/managers in this country, you have been designated as outstanding." President Ford personally congratulated Pearsall and the winners from the other 49 states and Puerto Rico at a reception following his luncheon address to the group.



Colorado's Duane D. Pearsall has been named the national Small Businessman of the Year. President Gerald R. Ford, featured speaker at a Salute to Small Business luncheon in Washington Thursday, congratulates the winner. Pearsall is president of Statitrol Corporation in Lakewood, Colorado.