



Working Together to Save Lives



Is your community ready for severe weather?

Nearly 90% of all presidentially declared disasters are weather related, leading to around 500 deaths per year and nearly \$14 billion in damage. To help Americans guard against the ravages of severe weather, NOAA's National Weather Service (NWS) designed the StormReady program. StormReady helps arm America's communities with the communication and safety skills they need to save lives and protect property.

Many laws and regulations exist to help local emergency managers deal with hazardous material spills, search and rescue operations, medical crises, etc., but there are few guidelines dealing with the specifics of hazardous weather response. The NWS recognized this need and designed StormReady to help communities of all kinds – towns, cities, counties, Tribal Nations, universities, and industrial complexes – implement procedures to reduce the potential for disastrous weather-related consequences. To be recognized as StormReady, communities must meet guidelines established by the NWS in partnership with federal, state, and local emergency management professionals.

Benefits of Your Community Becoming StormReady

The StormReady program encourages communities to take a proactive approach to improving local hazardous weather operations. The program is a "win" situation for everyone involved: community leaders; the NWS; emergency managers; and, the general public. Here are just a few of the benefits your community will realize once you become StormReady:

- Improves the timeliness and effectiveness of hazardous weather warnings for the public;
- Provides detailed and clear recommendations which will help local emergency managers establish and improve effective hazardous weather operations. It can also help justify costs and purchases needed to support hazardous mitigation and emergency response plans;
- Rewards local hazardous weather mitigation programs that have achieved a desired performance level;
- Provides a means to possibly acquire additional Community Rating System points assigned by the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP);
- Provides an image incentive to communities, which once recognized, can identify themselves as being StormReady; and,
- StormReady can help ensure your community is prepared for other civil emergencies.



Van Wert County, OH, proved it was StormReady when more than 50 movie goers lived through an F4 tornado after warnings sounded during a showing of Santa Claus 2. This is what remains of that movie theater.

Once officially recognized, a ceremony and press conference are conducted in your community commending the preparedness efforts of your civic leaders and emergency responders. You will receive a formal notification letter from your local NWS Office Director, plus two StormReady signs suitable for display in public buildings, your EOC, or even along roadways in your community. You'll also join the growing list of official StormReady communities on our national web site: www.stormready.noaa.gov/communities.htm



What it Takes to Become StormReady

StormReady is a voluntary program. There is no cost to apply. Your community may need to upgrade your emergency preparedness operations to meet StormReady program guidelines. Established emergency management programs should incur little or no additional expense. The Warning Coordination Meteorologist at your local NWS forecast office will gladly help you with the process. Here is what needs to get done:

- Incorporate your community’s severe weather threats into your community’s hazard mitigation and emergency response plans;
- Establish a 24-hour Warning Point and Emergency Operations Center;
- Establish multiple ways to receive severe weather warnings and forecasts and to alert the public;
- Create a system that monitors weather conditions locally; and,
- Promote the importance of public readiness through community seminars, severe weather spotter training and by conducting emergency exercises.

The StormReady Bottom Line

StormReady is a “grass roots” program sponsored by NOAA’s National Weather Service that focuses on improving communication and severe weather preparedness in communities. It helps community leaders and emergency managers strengthen local hazard mitigation and emergency response plans. From tornadoes to tsunamis, floods to winter storms, and wildfires to hurricanes, your community will be better prepared knowing they have the best possible chance of being warned before a weather disaster strikes.

Related web sites:

- National Weather Service Home Page.....www.weather.gov
- StormReady Homepage.....www.stormready.noaa.gov
- TsunamiReady Homepage.....www.tsunami.gov