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Operations and Services

Service Outreach NWSPD 10-18

THE STORMREADY® RECOGNITION PROGRAM

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Signed 6/14/2019

Andrew D. Stern Date
Director
Analyze, Forecast and Support Office

The StormReady Recognition Program

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1 The StormReady® Program Objective

The National Weather Service's (NWS) Weather-Ready Nation initiative is about building community resilience in the face of increasing vulnerability to extreme weather and water events. Roughly 98% of all presidential disaster declarations are weather and flood related, leading to over 500 deaths, 2,500 injuries and nearly $15 billion in damages each year *(sources: FEMA, NCDC and Munich RE).* The devastating impacts of extreme events can be reduced through improved readiness. The StormReady® program (www.weather.gov/stormready) is a partnership with emergency management that helps reduce risk and increases community resilience to hazards.

Since the program's inception in Oklahoma in 1999, over 2,000 counties, cities, towns, universities, Indian Nations, commercial sites, government facilities and military installations have been recognized as StormReady. The program recognizes emergency management programs that meet the StormReady guidelines, demonstrating outstanding preparedness for hazardous weather and flooding. StormReady ensures jurisdictions have a standard level of emergency planning and communication capabilities. An effective StormReady Program is essential for NWS to fulfill its mission of protecting life and property, and enhancing our Nation's economy.

By participating in StormReady, emergency managers can earn recognition for their jurisdiction by meeting the program's guidelines. The StormReady Program is intended to:

- Reduce fatalities, injuries and minimize property damage through timely distribution, receipt and effective communication of hazardous weather and flood warnings between the NWS, emergency managers and public
- Provide detailed and clear recommendations emergency managers may use to establish or improve hazardous weather and flood planning, operations and public response
- Empower Americans to make better decisions before and during weather and flood hazards through community preparedness

StormReady communities have made a strong commitment to implement the infrastructure and systems needed to save lives and protect property when hazardous weather and flooding strikes. StormReady is a voluntary program that directly supports NWS' strategic vision of a "Weather-Ready Nation."

NOTE: Implied or explicit references to "guidelines" or "requirements" are made only with regard to the voluntary participants in the StormReady program and should not be construed as being state, tribal or federal mandates.

1.1 StormReady Program Definitions

StormReady Community: An Indian tribal government*, local government† entity, or facility‡ that has the authority and ability to adopt the StormReady recognition guidelines within its jurisdiction.

> ***The term "Indian tribal government" means** the governing body of any Indian or Alaska Native tribe, band, nation, pueblo, village, or community that the Secretary of the Interior acknowledges to exist as an Indian tribe under the Federally Recognized Indian Tribe List Act of 1994 *[25 U.S.C. 479a et seq. January 3, 2012]*.
>
> **†The term "local government" means:**
>
> - A county, parish, borough, municipality, city, town, township, local public authority, school district, special district, intrastate district, council of governments (regardless of whether the council of governments is incorporated as a nonprofit corporation under State law), regional or interstate government entity, or agency or instrumentality of a local government
> - An Indian tribe or authorized tribal organization, or Alaska Native village or organization that is not an Indian tribal government
> - A rural community, unincorporated town or village, or other public entity, for which an application for assistance is made by a State or political subdivision of a State
>
> *[From Stafford Act, 42 U.S.C. 5121 et seq.; section 5122, as amended by Public Law 113-2, January 29, 2013]*
>
> **‡The term "facility" for a StormReady community includes but is not limited to:** universities, colleges, military installations, state/national parks, power plants/utilities, major transportation centers (i.e., airports, harbors, ports, railroad stations and other large transit complexes), theme parks/entertainment complexes, corporate business complexes, factories and large event venues (i.e., stadiums, arenas, race tracks, convention centers and other venues that temporarily host large gatherings of people).

StormReady Supporter: An organization, business, facility, or local government entity that has authority to adopt the StormReady recognition guidelines within its purview, actively promotes the principals of StormReady, but does not have the ability to meet all of the recognition guidelines.

Some examples of potential StormReady Supporters might include, but are not limited to: businesses, churches, hospitals, shopping centers, malls, utilities, museums, aquariums, individual schools, villages, small communities and broadcasters/broadcast stations.

StormReady Supporter participation and eligibility is based on the determinations (e.g., by-laws, charters, agreements, implementation plans) of the Local or State StormReady Boards. An entity applying for StormReady "Supporter" status should also receive endorsement from local emergency management within the applying entity's county or parish jurisdiction.

StormReady Sites: A generic term used to collectively identify all categories of StormReady communities but not Supporter entities.

Communications/Dispatch Center: Agency or interagency dispatch centers, 911 call centers, emergency control or command dispatch centers, or other facility and staff who handle emergency calls from the public and communication with emergency management/response personnel.

Emergency Operations Center (EOC): The physical location at which the coordination of information and resources to support incident management (on-scene operations) activities normally takes place. An EOC may be a temporary facility, a permanently established facility or located at a higher level of organization within a jurisdiction. EOCs may be organized by major functional disciplines (e.g., fire, law enforcement, medical services), by jurisdiction (e.g., federal, state, regional, tribal, city, county), or by some combination thereof.

24-Hour Warning Point (WP): A communication facility at a state or local level, operating 24 hours a day, which has the capability to receive NWS alerts and warnings, plus has the authority and ability to activate the public warning systems in its area of responsibility.

Emergency Operations Plan (EOP): A document maintained by various jurisdictional levels setting procedures for responding to a wide variety of potential hazards. It should include the following:

- Describe how people and property will be protected
- Detail who is responsible for carrying out specific actions
- Identify the personnel, equipment, facilities, supplies, and other resources available
- Outline how all actions will be coordinated

Emergency Management/Response Personnel: Includes federal, state, territorial, tribal, sub-state regional, and local governments, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), private sector organizations, critical infrastructure owners and operators, and all other organizations and individuals who assume an emergency management role.

Incident: An occurrence, natural or manmade, that requires a response to protect life or property. Incidents can, for example, include major disasters, emergencies, terrorist attacks, terrorist threats, civil unrest, wildland and urban fires, floods, hazardous materials spills, nuclear accidents, aircraft accidents, earthquakes, hurricanes, tornadoes, tropical storms, tsunamis, war-related disasters, public health and medical emergencies, and other occurrences requiring an emergency response.

Integrated Warning Team: A local or state level team that consists of emergency management, America's Weather and Climate Industry (typically the broadcast media), and the NWS, that shares the common goal and responsibility of improving the warning system and reducing fatalities, injuries and property damage due to natural hazards.

1.2 StormReady Recognition Guidelines

The StormReady Guidelines have been modified to better align with the National Incident Management System (NIMS). The goal of this NIMS-StormReady integration is to enhance collaboration between emergency managers and the NWS by creating more consistency in terminology and standards. NIMS provides a consistent nationwide framework and approach to enable all levels of government, the private sector, and NGOs to work together while responding to an incident regardless of its cause, size, location or complexity. The StormReady guidelines best align with three of the five components of NIMS:

1. **Command and Management:** Designed to enable effective and efficient incident management and coordination by providing a flexible, standardized incident management structure

2. **Communication and Information Management:** Creates a standardized framework for communications and emphasizes the need for a common operating picture

3. **Preparedness:** Involves an integrated combination of assessment, planning, procedures and protocols, training and exercises, personnel qualifications, licensure, certification, evaluation, and revision

   [Reference: www.fema.gov/national-incident-management-system]

Since the tax base typically dictates the resources applied to public programs, the guidelines for StormReady recognition are based on four population categories. StormReady guidelines include:

- Maintaining a Communication/Dispatch Center that serves as the 24-hour Warning Point (WP)* and an Emergency Operations Center (EOC) with redundant methods for receiving NWS warnings and relaying them to the public, including Public Alert™ certified NOAA Weather Radios placed in key facilities (for more information on Public Alert certified NOAA Weather Radios, please go to: www.nws.noaa.gov/nwr/)
- Ensuring the WP and EOC are able to monitor local weather and flood observation data for increased situation awareness
- Ensuring hazardous weather and flooding are addressed in formal emergency management plans
- Conducting community preparedness programs (e.g., training, exercises, safety campaigns) on hazardous weather and flooding, including training a network of SKYWARN® weather spotters
- Establishing an effective working relationship between the emergency management agency/organization and the local NWS Forecast Office, including an understanding of the decision support provided by key NWS offices such as River Forecast Centers, Storm Prediction Center, National Hurricane Center, Weather Prediction Center, Aviation Weather Center and the Space Weather Prediction Center

*__Note__: It is only necessary for "facilities" that are designated as "StormReady Communities" (reference definition in section 1.1) to have WP and EOC capabilities during business operations and/or when the facility is open to the public. See Appendix A for a detailed listing of the StormReady guidelines.

1.3 America's Weather and Climate Industry

America's Weather and Climate Industry (AWCI) is a key partner in helping the NWS fulfill its mission. AWCI includes all elements of the private sector (including media, consultants, equipment providers, etc.) which provide services to the public in the areas of climate, water, and weather. StormReady guidelines may be satisfied by incorporating products, data, and services provided by AWCI.

2 Authorities and Responsibilities

2.1 Weather Forecast Offices

It is the responsibility of each Weather Forecast Office's (WFO) Warning Coordination Meteorologist (WCM) or designee, as overseen by the Meteorologist-in-Charge (MIC), to implement and manage the StormReady Program within his or her County Warning and Forecast Area (CWFA). This includes the following:

- Works with interested emergency managers by:
  - Assisting with application process
  - Archiving StormReady applications
  - Arranging for an optional recognition ceremony
  - Planning for and following up on renewal process
  - Working with, where applicable, the Local, State and/or Regional StormReady Boards
  - Arranging for, when appropriate, StormReady awards (see sections 6.2 and 6.3)
- Reviews all StormReady applications, verifies the information, and coordinates their approval with Local, State and/or Regional StormReady Boards
- Coordinates the prioritization of StormReady applicants with the Local/State StormReady Board based on available resources. The National StormReady Board recommends the following prioritization:
  - County (or the geopolitical equivalent) recognitions
  - Other full StormReady recognitions
  - StormReady Supporters
- Coordinates news releases with the NOAA Public Affairs
- Adds recognitions to the NWS Headquarters Analyze, Forecast and Support Office StormReady database
- Mentors and trains WFO staff in the StormReady Program
- Promotes the StormReady Program
- Implements service improvements to the StormReady Program
- Coordinates StormReady Award nominations with Local, State and/or Regional Boards

- Reports StormReady activities (e.g., meetings with emergency managers, hazards preparedness education in communities, verification visits, ceremonies) through the NWS Outreach and Education Event System as per NWSI 10-1804
- Administers other aspects of the program as necessary

WCMs/designees are required to inform StormReady and StormReady Supporter applicants who represent large event venues of information regarding NWS support of special events and the role of AWCI in providing weather information in support of their operations. For more information, please reference:

- NWSI 10-1806 *NWS Support for Special Events*
- http://www.weather.gov/media/stormready/resources/specialevents.pdf

WCMs/designees should also inform applicants that StormReady guidelines may be satisfied by incorporating data/services provided by AWCI.

2.2 Regional Headquarters

The Regional Director is the first-line supervisor of the Regional Division Chiefs, River Forecast Center Hydrologists-In-Charge (HIC) and WFO MICs, and assigns StormReady Program responsibilities for the region. It is the responsibility of the Regional StormReady Program Manager, typically the Regional WCM, to manage the StormReady Program on a regional basis. This includes the following:

- Coordinating StormReady programmatic, budgetary, and policy issues with NWS Headquarters on behalf of their region's WFOs/WCMs
- Representing the region on the National StormReady Board
- Directing and overseeing service improvements to the StormReady Program
- When available, managing the Regional budget and other resources for the StormReady Program
- Coordinating news releases with NOAA Public Affairs
- Promoting the StormReady Program
- Coordinating StormReady Award nominations between Local, State and the National StormReady Boards
- When applicable, coordinating the Regional StormReady Board
- Reports StormReady activities through the NWS Outreach and Education Event System as per NWSI 10-1804
- As necessary, developing and maintaining regional supplements to this national directive

2.3 NWS Headquarters - Analyze, Forecast and Support Office

The National Weather Service Headquarters' (NWSH) Analyze, Forecast and Support Office (AFS) is responsible for a variety of activities supporting the StormReady Program. The AFS Director assigns StormReady Program responsibilities for AFS.

2.3.1 AFS Decision Support Integration Branch

It is the responsibility of the National WCM and WCM Program Coordinator to manage the StormReady Program on a national basis. This includes the following:

- Coordinates StormReady programmatic, budgetary, and policy issues within National Headquarters on behalf of our Regional Headquarters and local WCMs/designees
- Chairs and coordinates the National StormReady Board
- Directs and oversees service improvements to the StormReady Program
- Manages the national budget and other resources for the StormReady Program
- Procures and manages national resources such as StormReady recognition signs, brochures, templates and other tools
- Coordinates news releases with NOAA Public Affairs
- Oversees the national StormReady database and website
- Promotes the StormReady Program
- Coordinates StormReady Award nominations between Local, State and/or Regional StormReady Boards and the National StormReady Board
- Serves as the Office of Primary Responsibility (OPR) for this procedural directive
- Reports StormReady activities through the NWS Outreach and Education Event System as per NWSI 10-1804
- Coordinates with the AFS Tsunami Program Manager/designee on TsunamiReady
- Serves as the WCM for emergency managers on U.S. military installations located in other countries that are interested in StormReady and/or TsunamiReady
- As necessary, develops and maintains memoranda of understanding or memoranda of agreement with national partners

2.4 StormReady Applicants

StormReady applicants are responsible for working with their local WCM/designee throughout the StormReady recognition process. This includes:

- Completing the application
- Working with the local WCM/designee on the verification of the application (section 3.2.1 below)
- Coordinating information for the optional recognition news release and ceremony
- Maintaining or improving on the site's compliance with StormReady guidelines throughout the valid period of the StormReady recognition
- Apprising the local WCM/designee about candidates for StormReady Awards
- Working with the local WCM/designee on renewal of the StormReady recognition

2.5 StormReady Board Organizations

StormReady Boards implement and oversee the StormReady Program. Since StormReady is a partnership with emergency managers it is critical to have their participation in the administration of the program. The longstanding success of StormReady has proven this approach effective. Boards should be set up on a regional, multi-state, state and/or local WFO

level. Integrated Warning Teams or other partner meetings can serve as a means for conducting StormReady Board activities. NWS should also maintain a National StormReady Board. StormReady Boards should routinely communicate on the administration of the program and meet at least once a year.

2.5.1 Local/State StormReady Board

StormReady is collaboratively administered through a Local and/or State StormReady Board with representatives from a local and/or state emergency management agency and association as well as the NWS. The Local/State StormReady Board can enhance StormReady guidance to fit local and state situations. Examples may include an enhanced set of guidance for schools, universities, large event venues, etc., or to deal better with natural hazards within the state, e.g., wildfires, winter weather, tropical cyclones, extreme temperatures, etc., The "StormReady®" branding will remain intact when implementing such efforts. Similarly, the StormReady administration and application forms may not be altered. NWS recommends enhanced StormReady or StormReady Supporter guidance be implemented through a toolkit, check list and/or other guidance maintained by the Local/State and/or Regional StormReady Boards and promoted through the national StormReady website. WCMs/designees and emergency managers should use these resources to enhance the standard national StormReady guidelines when pursuing their StormReady or StormReady Supporter recognitions. Each Local/State StormReady Board consists of at a minimum:

- NWS MIC or designee
- NWS WCM or designee
- Local/State emergency management agency director or designee
- State emergency management association president or designee

The Local/State StormReady Board may oversee all steps leading to a jurisdiction's StormReady recognition. This may include:

- Determining and documenting the Board's activities
- Providing incentives such as grant funding
- Promoting mitigation and preparedness best practices
- Implementing procedures for application review
- Coordinating ceremonies and awards
- Resolving state-specific issues

2.5.2 Regional StormReady Board

Each of the NWS six regional offices may have Regional StormReady Boards. The NWS Regional Director or designee determines team membership. Regional StormReady Boards support the activities of the State Boards and ensure the national guidelines are maintained. This may include

- Providing incentives such as grant funding
- Promoting mitigation and preparedness best practices

- Implementing procedures for application review
- Coordinating ceremonies and awards
- Resolving regional specific issues.
- Coordinating recommendations for change to the national guidelines, programmatic issues and nominations for awards with the National StormReady Board

2.5.3 National StormReady Board

StormReady is collaboratively administered through a National StormReady Board that may include representatives from the International Association of Emergency Managers (IAEM), National Emergency Management Association (NEMA), and the NWS. The National StormReady Board is responsible for general oversight of the program. It maintains a minimum set of recognition guidelines consistent across the country. The board reviews existing and proposed guidelines at its annual meetings. It addresses challenges, determines projects, publishes guidance, prioritizes funding when available and identifies future goals for the program. A long standing goal for the board is to establish more incentives such as a StormReady grant to help jurisdictions become StormReady or maintain their capacity for dealing with hazardous weather and flooding (Note: Board meetings are only conducted when funding is available). The National StormReady Board includes:

- National WCM (Chair)
- NWS Regional WCMs
- President or designees of NEMA
- President or designees of IAEM

3 StormReady Application Process

The application for StormReady recognition is a formal process requiring the following:

- Emergency Manager submitting an application form
- Local WCM/designee verifying the information
- Local/State and/or Regional Boards reviewing the information
- WCM/designee providing formal notification of site recognition

StormReady application forms are cleared through the White House's Office of Management and Budget and will not be modified. StormReady application forms are available on the NWS StormReady website at: www.weather.gov/stormready/become

3.1 Application Submission

StormReady and StormReady Supporter applications should be sent to the local WCM/designee. If a hard copy is utilized, it should be scanned into an electronic format by the WCM/designee and stored locally. While much of the application is a basic accounting of technology, a brief narrative describing preparedness and planning activities is necessary and will help assess how hazardous weather and flooding are addressed in the emergency operations plan, exercises, and public safety programs.

Note: Coastal communities that apply for StormReady recognition may also satisfy many of the guidelines for becoming TsunamiReady, and are therefore strongly encouraged to jointly apply for TsunamiReady recognition as well.

Some applicants may have jurisdiction over a community and surrounding unincorporated areas. In these cases, a single application is sufficient, with the combined populations used to determine the appropriate guideline categories. If a community earns StormReady recognition, the unincorporated communities will be included in the recognition, but are not individually recognized. The Local/State or Regional StormReady Board coordinates how unique StormReady recognitions are implemented.

3.2 Application Review

The local WCM/designee reviews all StormReady and StormReady Supporter applications for the office's area of responsibility. The WCM/designee verifies the information with the applicant. For StormReady applicants, the WCM/designee then coordinates the approval with the Local/State or Regional (if applicable) StormReady Board. For StormReady Supporter applicants, the local WCM/designee may immediately approve the application. In either case, if an application indicates the guidelines are not met, the WCM/designee notifies the applicant about changes needed to meet the guidelines. After these changes are made, the applicant should submit an updated application for additional review by the local WCM/designee.

The Local/State or Regional StormReady Board may review a jurisdiction's StormReady application and discuss the verification of the information with the local WCM/designee. The Local/State or Regional StormReady Board may approve an application for recognition after this first review.

If the recognition is not approved, the Local/State or Regional StormReady Board will list improvements needed for the community to achieve recognition. If a community disputes a decision made by the Local/State StormReady Board, the dispute is forwarded to the Regional StormReady Board or, if one does not exist, the Chair of National StormReady Board, for resolution. Similarly, disputes at the Regional StormReady Board level should be forwarded to the Chair of National StormReady Board for resolution.

3.2.1 Verification of Application Information

The local WCM/designee verifies application information with the applicant. Historically, this process included a site verification visit. Due to the travel costs, the growth of the StormReady Program, and the emergence of effective web tools, the program now allows a virtual site verification visit. Tools such as video teleconference, Webinar, Go-To-Meeting, etc., may be used to verify an application's information. In extreme cases for very remote communities, the verification may be accomplished via email and phone correspondence.*

In general, verification of an application by the WCM/designee includes the following:

- Verify WP and EOC equipment listed on application
- Confirm suitable location and readiness of equipment
- Review how hazardous weather and flooding are addressed in the community's Emergency Operations Plan including review of the following:
  - How the site identifies hazardous weather and flooding and assesses risk
  - How flood prone areas are identified and what procedures exist to prevent citizens from entering those areas or to evacuate such areas when necessary
  - SKYWARN weather spotter activation criteria and reporting procedures
  - Communication/Dispatch Center procedures relating to hazardous weather and flooding
  - EOC activation criteria and deactivation procedures
  - Criteria and procedures for activating the public warning system in its area of responsibility
  - Contact information for all jurisdictional agencies and response partners including the NWS
  - Ability of the site to assess significant hazardous weather and flood incidents through an After Action Review, or similar, identify lessons learned and best practices, and evolve emergency response planning accordingly
- Understanding of how hazardous weather and flooding are addressed in the community's mitigation and preparedness program(s), including activities such as safety campaigns, public education projects and exercises.

*In instances where remote verification is necessary, at a minimum verify the following through documentation and photographic evidence provided by the applicant to the local WCM/designee and/or Local/State StormReady Board:

- EOC/Warning Point facilities
- Equipment used to receive & disseminate NWS warnings and information
- Equipment used to monitor hazardous weather and flood conditions
- Emergency Operations Plan addressing hazardous weather and flooding
- Training and exercises
- Community preparedness activities

Ultimately it is the responsibility of the local NWS office and its Regional Headquarters to ensure that the principals of StormReady are being properly applied and the NWS mission is being served.

4 StormReady Recognition Process

Once the StormReady Site or StormReady Supporter application is approved, the local WCM/designee enters the information in the national StormReady database. The applicant is notified through a formal recognition letter from the local MIC or WCM. A site is recognized for 3 years from the date the official letter of recognition. Communities covered under a county recognition should be listed on this letter. This date is the one the WCM/designee enters into the AFS national StormReady database as the recognition date.

When the WCM/designee enters the new site into the database, the site has the option to request a StormReady Recognition sign (Appendix B) (Note: signs are only available through AFS when funding is available for procurement). In addition the site will receive:

- StormReady Certificate of Recognition
- Authorization to use the StormReady logo
- Instructions for acquiring additional signs
- Information concerning possible adjustment to insurance rates under the National Flood Insurance Program (section 6.1)

Recognition signs are suitable for display on or in buildings (e.g., courthouses, libraries, town halls, EOCs, etc.) Some communities have posted their signs along roadways; however, it is recommended that officials first consult county or state road departments regarding restrictions. StormReady recognition signs are not approved by the Federal Highway Administration.

Once the site is approved, the local WCM/designee may work with the successful applicant on an optional news release and/or recognition ceremony. The community will also now be listed on the national StormReady website.

4.1 StormReady Recognition Ceremony

The local WCM/designee will coordinate details of any recognition announcement and/or ceremony with the successful applicant. A typical ceremony includes a formal media announcement and should be a combination of the following:

- Unveiling of the official StormReady sign
- Presentation of a Certificate of Recognition
- Press conference

The local WCM/designee should work with the Regional NOAA Public Affairs Officer and the Regional StormReady Program Manager to prepare the news release and coordinate ceremony activities. The NWS StormReady website and the AFS Integrated Database for Education and Awareness (https://verification.nws.noaa.gov/IDEA/index.aspx - NOAA internal) offer more information and examples of recognition materials.

4.2 StormReady Recognition Monitoring

A formal plan to monitor a recognized jurisdiction is not necessary; however, if a formal concern is brought to the Local/State or Regional StormReady Board, it will review the issue and may suspend the recognition for 60 days while the review is conducted. If the Local/State and/or Regional StormReady Board's review indicates the community no longer meets StormReady guidelines, and the discrepancy cannot be resolved within a reasonable amount of time, the local WCM/designee, Local/State and/or Regional StormReady Board will revoke that jurisdiction's StormReady recognition status (see Section 4.4).

4.3 Renewal of StormReady Recognition

StormReady recognition will be valid for 3 years from the date of the official letter of recognition. This date will be entered in the national StormReady database as the recognition date. Six months prior to the expiration of the recognition, the StormReady database automatically sends a renewal reminder to the local WCM/designee. Following the applicable guidelines published at the time of the notification, the local WCM/designee coordinates with the point of contact from the jurisdiction to verify the original application information is still in order. Once verified, the local WCM/designee notes this in the WFO's records and updates the renewal date in the StormReady database. The StormReady recognition renewal is then valid for an additional 3 years, 6 total years, from the date of the official letter of recognition. The local WCM/designee then notifies the site's point of contact regarding the approval of the renewal.

After the initial 3-year renewal, subsequent renewals will require the community to renew the full application process (Section 3). This process helps ensure required equipment is in place, contact information is accurate, and technological advances in communications and warning dissemination are applied and documented as needed. Additional renewals will repeat the interval outlined above: after nine years, a contact renewal, after 12 years, a full application review, etc.

If the anniversary date for a renewal passes, a community will not immediately lose its StormReady status if it has communicated to the local WCM/designee it is ready and willing to accomplish the renewal. In these instances, the local WCM/designee should notify the WCM Program Coordinator in AFS for permission for a 6-month extension. A second six-month extension may be granted in extreme cases. Once the renewal is finally completed, the local WCM/designee updates the StormReady database indicating the renewal. The anniversary date from the date of the official letter of recognition will not change and the jurisdiction will simply have 6 months less time before their next renewal. For example, if the initial renewal was May 22, 2014, and the site does not renew until October 29, 2014, the renewal date would be May 22, 2017. The same rule applies to sites that are proactive and renew early.

4.4 StormReady Recognition Status Revocation

A jurisdiction will only lose its StormReady status if it fails to renew its recognition as outlined above. The following actions will be taken:

- The local WCM/designee, Local/State and/or Regional StormReady Board will provide notification to the jurisdiction.
- Notification will also be sent to the National Flood Insurance Program informing them of this action.
- The local WCM/designee should also notify the WCM Program Coordinator in AFS and update the national StormReady database and website.
- The Local/State and/or Regional StormReady Board may request StormReady signs be removed/returned.

5 StormReady Supporter

Businesses, schools, and other non-governmental entities often establish severe weather safety plans and actively participate in and promote severe weather safety awareness activities. Many of these entities do not have the resources necessary to fulfill the eligibility requirements for StormReady Site recognition status. An entity that promotes the principles and guidelines of the StormReady Program, but does not meet the guidelines for StormReady Site recognition may be eligible to be designated as a StormReady Supporter. StormReady recognition of the county or community in which the entity resides is not a requirement to achieve the Supporter designation.

5.1 StormReady Supporter Applications, Recognitions and Renewals

Entities interested in becoming a StormReady Supporter should first check with their local WCM/designee to ensure that optional StormReady Supporter recognitions are utilized based on the determinations of the Local/State StormReady Board. If the local WFO participates and supports the optional StormReady Supporter Program, then entities should complete the Supporter application on the national StormReady website (www.weather.gov/stormready/become) and submit it to their local WCM/designee for review. The WCM/designee and/or Local/State StormReady Board verify the information with the applicant and may immediately approve the application. If an application indicates the guidelines are not met, the applicant will be notified about changes needed to meet the respective guidelines. After these changes are made, the applicant should submit an updated application for review by the local WCM/designee and/or Local/State StormReady Board.

A StormReady Supporter receives a StormReady Supporter Certificate dated and signed by the local WCM/MIC and/or Local/State StormReady Board. The date printed on the StormReady Supporter Certificate will be considered the official date of the Supporter designation and is valid for up to 5 years (The Local/State StormReady Board may impose a shorter valid period based on their determinations). The local WCM/designee, in consultation with the local government emergency manager, may prepare an optional news release and/or ceremony. Upon request, the successful StormReady Supporter applicant will receive the following:

- StormReady Supporter Certificate of Recognition
- Authorization to use the StormReady logo
- Listing on the national StormReady website

Once approved, the local WCM/designee notes the site in the WFOs records and enters the Supporter into the national StormReady database.

Six months prior to the expiration of the Supporter recognition, the national StormReady database sends an automated email to the local WCM/designee. Following the applicable Supporter guidelines, the local WCM/designee coordinates with the point of contact from the Supporter entity to verify the original application is in order. Once verified, the local WCM/designee notes this in the WFO's records and updates the StormReady database. The local WCM/designee then notifies the point of contact from the jurisdiction for their records. If the local WCM/designee is unable to verify the Supporter's renewal or if the Supporter entity no

longer wishes to participate, the local WCM/designee will delete the site from the national StormReady database.

6 StormReady Incentives

StormReady communities are better prepared to save lives from hazardous weather and flooding through advanced planning, education, and awareness. No community is storm proof, but becoming StormReady can help communities save lives. Some incentives for participation in StormReady include:

- Proven to help save lives during severe weather and flood events
- Improves coordination and timeliness of hazardous weather and flood warning dissemination, reception and response
- Strengthens the working relationship between emergency managers and the NWS
- Provides a means for acquiring up to 55 Insurance Services Office/Community Rating System points to possibly lower National Flood Insurance Program premiums
- Helps emergency managers justify costs and purchases related to their hazardous weather and flood preparedness programs
- Rewards local hazardous weather and flood mitigation programs that have achieved a desired performance level
- Improves community image
- Recognizes emergency managers for their hard work helping their communities reduce vulnerability to hazards and cope with disasters
- Encourages better hazardous weather and flood preparedness programs in surrounding jurisdictions

6.1 National Flood Insurance Program

FEMA's National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) provides federally backed flood insurance within communities that enact and enforce floodplain regulations. To be covered by a flood insurance policy (for the structure and/or its contents), a property needs to be in a community that participates in the NFIP. To qualify for the NFIP, a community adopts and enforces a floodplain management ordinance to regulate development in flood hazard areas. The objective of the ordinance is to minimize the potential for flood damage to future development. The NFIP has been effective in requiring new buildings to be protected from damage by a 1% chance flood, also known as the 100-year or base flood. However, flood damage still results from floods that exceed the base flood, from flooding in unmapped areas, and from flooding that affects buildings constructed before the community joined the NFIP. Today, over 21,600 communities in 56 states and territories participate in the NFIP.

The goals of the NFIP are to provide flood insurance to property owners, to reduce flood losses by communities, and to save taxpayers money. As a part of the NFIP, FEMA developed the Community Rating System (CRS) to provide incentives and tools to further all-hazards, pre-disaster mitigation. Under the CRS, communities can be rewarded for doing more than simply regulating construction of new buildings to the minimum national standards. The 2013 CRS Coordinator's Manual (http://crsresources.org) spells out the credits and credit criteria for

community activities and programs that go above and beyond the minimum requirements for participation in the NFIP.

The CRS recognizes the importance not only of effective flood warning and response in a comprehensive floodplain management program, but also of coordinating public information, regulatory programs, and flood protection with the efforts of emergency management. Emergency management is included in a number of CRS activities, but especially the three activities in the 600 series, which focus specifically on the principle that an ample warning combined with a flood response plan can prevent loss of life and damage to property.

Under section 610 — *Flood Warning and Response Activities* — of the CRS Coordinator's Manual, jurisdictions recognized by NWS as StormReady can receive **25** community rating points towards lowering their flood insurance rates. A community can participate in both the StormReady and TsunamiReady programs and receive credit for both elements, SRC (25) and TRC (30) for up to **55** total community rating points. [Reference pp. 610-1 through 610-19, 2013 CRS Coordinator's Manual, FIA-15/2013]

In addition, both the StormReady and TsunamiReady programs recognize communities that conduct community preparedness outreach and education on flood hazards. Those efforts can contribute to a community's earning of additional community rating points under the section 330 CRS — *Outreach Projects* — of the CRS Coordinator's Manual. [Reference pp. 330-1 through 330-21, 2013 CRS Coordinator's Manual, FIA-15/2013]

CRS credits for StormReady are not automatically granted to each local jurisdiction that receives the StormReady designation. The 25 points are provided for obtaining and maintaining the designation as a NWS StormReady community AND meeting the following CRS prerequisites as outlined in section 611.b — *Activity Credit Criteria* — of the CRS Coordinator's Manual:

1. A Flood Threat Recognition (FTR) system that provides the community with the earliest possible detection that a flood is imminent. [Reference pp. 610-5 & 6]
2. Emergency Warning Dissemination (EWD) capability that provides emergency warning alerts and messages to the public when a flood is imminent. [Reference pp. 610-8 through 610-11]
3. A flood warning and response plan that details a Flood Response Operations (FRO) capability and that has been adopted by the community's governing body. This is likely addressed through the community's Emergency Operations Plan (EOP). [Reference pp. 610-3, 4 & 11-15]
4. Critical Facilities Planning (CFP) - The community has coordinated its warning and response program with its critical facilities. [Reference pp. 610-15 through 610-17]
5. The community has completed a risk assessment for flooding as part of their floodplain management or hazard mitigation plan, or completed the CRS Community Self-Assessment. [Reference pp. 610-3]
6. The community has a flood inundation map(s) that shows areas that are inundated by at least three different flood and/or storm surge levels. [Reference pp. 610-3 & 4]

7. The community implements one or more outreach projects that tells its residents and businesses how they will be warned and the safety measures they should take during a flood. [Reference pp. 610-4 & 5]
8. There is at least one exercise and evaluation of the flood warning and response plan each year. [Reference pp. 610-5]

Jurisdictions should notify their Insurance Services Office, Inc. (ISO)/Community Rating System (CRS) Specialist [Reference CRS contacts at http://crsresources.org/100-2/] once they are officially recognized as StormReady by the NWS. The ISO/CRS Specialist is an employee of the ISO, FEMA's CRS management contractor. The ISO/CRS Specialist will base this credit on the NWS listing of StormReady jurisdictions posted at www.weather.gov/stormready. For communities within a county recognition occasionally the StormReady letter of recognition must be provided showing that community is covered under the county's recognition.

6.2 StormReady Hero Award

The StormReady Hero Award is a special national level recognition that may be presented by senior NWS officials to an individual(s) within a jurisdiction recognized as StormReady. The award formally recognizes individuals within a StormReady community in which lives have been saved as a direct result of those individuals' proactive actions, personifying the NWS StormReady Program. StormReady Hero Award guidelines are as follows:

- Award consideration will take place on a case-by-case basis
- The award may be given to a single individual or to several public safety officials within a community
- The impacted community has successfully implemented and is recognized as StormReady before the weather or flood event occurs
- Lives were saved as a result of the successful application of the Integrated Warning Team:
  - Detection of the weather hazard
  - Reception of the warning from NWS
  - Dissemination of the warning by emergency management officials to the at-risk community
  - Response/protective actions taken by the at-risk population
- There is clear and unambiguous evidence of proactive actions, *beyond the nominee's normal duties*, resulting in lives saved in the impacted community
- A community may still be eligible for the award even if there was loss of life as long as there were lives saved as a direct result of the StormReady Program.

6.2.1 StormReady Hero Award Protocol

The StormReady Hero Award is nominated at the local level, either by an emergency manager or the local MIC/WCM. Typically the local WCM/designee prepares the nomination based on the award guidelines in Section 6.2 within 1 month of the event. The nomination is then forwarded to the Local/State and/or Regional StormReady Board for its approval. Once cleared, the Regional WCM/StormReady Program Manager shares the nomination with the National WCM.

The nomination is then shared with the National StormReady Board members who formally vote on the nomination. A majority vote is needed by the National StormReady Board for approval. The National WCM then communicates the decision of the National StormReady Board to all parties. If approved, the following should occur (depending on available funding):

- Generally, a high profile media event is scheduled for the award presentation ceremony
- The ceremony should be arranged with collaboration among the following:
  - NWS/NOAA Public Affairs
  - Regional Public Affairs Officer
  - Regional StormReady Program Manager
  - National WCM and WCM Program Coordinator
  - Local WCM/MIC
  - Local/State StormReady Board members
  - Sponsoring community/state organization
- A framed certificate(s) or plaque is presented to the recipient(s) at the award ceremony. The certificate/plaque should note StormReady Hero Award.
- The top NWS keynote speaker and presenter at the award ceremony will generally be determined by NWS leadership at the Regional or National Headquarters level.
- The news release from the StormReady Hero Award ceremony will be archived on the national StormReady website.
- The local WFO is encouraged to also submit an *Aware* newsletter article (www.weather.gov/publications/aware) highlighting the StormReady Champion accomplishment to the *Aware* managing editor in AFS.

6.3 StormReady Champion Award

The StormReady Champion Award is a special local or state level recognition presented by NWS officials to an individual(s) or organization for exceptional service, achievement and/or leadership through the StormReady program. StormReady Champions are individuals that have gone above and beyond their normal duties in advocating for and implementing StormReady. StormReady Champion Awards are approved by the Local/State StormReady Board. StormReady Champion Award guidelines are as follows:

- Award consideration will take place on a case-by-case basis.
- The award may be given to an individual(s) or an organization within a StormReady community or state.
- At least one of the following criteria should be achieved:
  - *Exceptional Service* – Through years of dedication has fostered a preparedness culture that personifies the StormReady program.
  - *Outstanding Achievement* – Has taken significant actions that have saved lives and/or property through the StormReady program.
  - *Visionary Leadership* – Through innovation and inspiration has led significant improvements in the effectiveness of the StormReady program.

6.3.1 StormReady Champion Award Protocol

The StormReady Champion Award is nominated at the local level, either by an emergency manager or the local MIC/WCM. Typically, the local WCM/designee prepares the nomination based on the award guidelines in Section 6.3. The nomination is then shared with the Local/State StormReady Board for its approval. The MIC/WCM will communicate the decision of the Local/State StormReady Board with all parties. The local WCM/MIC should keep both the Regional and National StormReady Program Managers informed throughout the process. If approved, the following should occur (depending on available funding):

- Generally, NWS will hold a media event in collaboration with the following:
  - NWS/NOAA Public Affairs
  - Regional StormReady Program Manager
  - Local MIC/WCM
  - Local/State StormReady Board members
  - Sponsoring community/state organization
- A framed certificate(s) or plaque is presented to the recipient(s) at the award ceremony. The certificate/plaque will note StormReady Champion Award.
- Generally, the top NWS keynote speaker and presenter at the award ceremony will be determined by NWS leadership at the Regional Headquarters level. Typically this would be the local MIC.
- Once approved, the Regional WCM/StormReady Program Manager shares the information with the National WCM and the National StormReady Board.
- The news release from the StormReady Champion Award ceremony will be archived on the national StormReady website.
- The local WFO is encouraged to also submit an *Aware* newsletter article (www.weather.gov/publications/aware) highlighting the StormReady Champion accomplishment to the *Aware* managing editor in AFS.

APPENDIX A - StormReady Recognition Guidelines*

Population:	< 2,500	2,500 - 14,999	15,000 - 40,000	>40,000
Component 1: Command and Management				
Guideline 1.1: Communication/Dispatch Center and Emergency Operation Center				
Operate Communication/Dispatch Center that serves as the 24-hour Warning Point (WP)	X**	X**	X	X
Operate Emergency Operations Center (EOC)		X**	X	X
Component 2: Communication and Information Management				
Guideline 2.1: NWS Warning and Information Reception				
Maintain the required **number of ways** for the WP and EOC to receive NWS warnings and information	3	4	4	4
Guideline 2.2: Warning Dissemination				
Maintain the required **number of ways** for the WP and EOC to disseminate warnings	1	2	3	4
Operate Public Alert™ certified NOAA Weather Radio receivers in key public facilities	X	X	X	X
Guideline 2.3: Hazardous Weather and Flood Monitoring				
Maintain the required number of ways to monitor for hazardous weather and flood conditions	1	2	3	4
Guideline 2.4: Communication				
Ensure routine communication between NWS and the emergency management agency/organization	X	X	X	X
Able to communicate within and across jurisdictions through resilient and redundant methods	X	X	X	X
Component 3: Preparedness				
Guideline 3.1: Planning				
Address hazardous weather and flooding in formal Emergency Operations Plan (EOP)	X	X	X	X
Guideline 3.2: Training and Exercises				
Conduct an exercise relating to natural hazards every three years	X	X	X	X
Train spotters and dispatchers biennially	X	X	X	X
Host/co-host biennial NWS spotter training				X
Guideline 3.3: Community Preparedness				
Conduct the required **number of annual weather safety activities**	1	2	3	4

** StormReady guidelines may be satisfied by incorporating data/services provided by America's Weather and Climate Industry.*

*** For cities or towns with less than 15,000 people, a 24-hour WP and EOC capability are required; however, another jurisdiction within the county may provide that resource. Please reference † Note below in Guideline 1.1 for more details.*

Component 1: Command and Management

The Command and Management component of NIMS is designed to enable effective and efficient incident management and coordination by providing a flexible, standardized incident management structure. Most hazardous weather and flood incidents are managed locally with the response coordinated through the local Communications/Dispatch Centers and, if necessary, an Emergency Operations Center (EOC).

Guideline 1.1: Communication/Dispatch Center

To receive recognition under the StormReady Program, an applying jurisdiction will need a Communication/Dispatch Center that serves as the 24-hour Warning Point (WP)†, has the capability to receive NWS alerts and warnings, and has the authority and ability to activate the public warning system in its area of responsibility. Typically, this WP is a law enforcement or fire department dispatching point, or a 911 call center. The Communication/Dispatch Center should have training on NWS decision support, the monitoring of hazardous weather and flood incidents, and the protocols for communicating reports to support the NWS warning decision-making process. This training can be accomplished through a variety of delivery methods (e.g., FEMA's Emergency Management Institute courses, COMET MetEd courses, state or locally developed training, etc.) StormReady communities are expected to share hazardous weather and flood damage reports with their local NWS WFO. Using NWSChat or a similar communication tool is ideal for this type of coordination. At a minimum, these reports should include the type, location, and time of significant weather and flood events.

†**Note:** For jurisdictions without a local Communication/Dispatch Center that can serve as a 24-hour WP, another jurisdiction (e.g., county, adjacent community, state, etc.) may act in that capacity for the jurisdiction. This scenario is most likely in smaller jurisdictions (e.g., in Alaska and the U.S. territories) with less than 5,000 residents. This type of working arrangement should be addressed in both jurisdictions' plans and operational protocols. Such an arrangement might also require a standing mutual aid agreement through a memorandum of understanding (MoU) or some other formal means. The smaller jurisdiction should designate responsible officials who are able to receive warnings 24/7 from their surrogate 24-hour WP. NWS recommends the smaller jurisdiction designate several primary and backup points of contact as the responsible officials. These responsible officials should have the authority and ability to activate the public warning system in their jurisdiction in a timely manner. It is also recommended that the responsible officials in the smaller jurisdiction have a 24/7 redundant means to receive alerts, such as NOAA Weather Radio All Hazards, InteractiveNWS, and related services provided by AWCI.

Guideline 1.2: Emergency Operation Center

To receive recognition under the StormReady Program, an applying jurisdiction with a population of 2500 or more will need to establish an EOC capability. The EOC will need to be staffed during hazardous weather and flood incidents. When activated, the EOC will likely assume the Communication/Dispatch Center's warning coordination and dissemination functions. The following summarizes roles of an EOC for hazardous weather and flood incidents:

- Activated according to the EOP guidelines, which may include NWS decision support information;
- May assume the Communication/Dispatch Center's warning coordination and dissemination functions;
- Staffed with trained and credentialed emergency management personnel
- Has alert and warning reception capability (Guideline 2.1);
- Has ability and authority to activate the public warning system in its area of responsibility;
- Maintains ability to communicate within and across jurisdictions (e.g., with other EOCs including those maintained by private organizations, Incident Command Posts, etc.) through resilient and redundant methods. Should have communication capabilities equal to or better than the Communication/Dispatch Center;
- Maintains established communication links with NWS (e.g., NWSChat, phone, etc.) to relay real-time weather and flood damage reports to support the warning decision making process.

The physical size, staffing, and equipping of an EOC will depend on the size of the jurisdiction, resources available and anticipated incident management workload. EOCs may be organized and staffed in a variety of ways. The efficient functioning of EOCs most frequently depends on the existence of mutual aid agreements and joint communications protocols among participating agencies.

For jurisdictions without an EOC capability, another jurisdiction may act in that capacity for them. This type of working arrangement should be addressed in both jurisdictions' plans and operational protocols. Such an arrangement might also require a formal standing mutual aid agreement through a MoU. The surrogate EOC should be able to perform all of the above listed functions on the behalf of the jurisdictions without an EOC capability.

Note: It is only necessary for facilities that are designated as "StormReady Communities" (reference definition in section 1.1) to have WP and EOC capabilities during business operations and/or when the facility is open to the public.

Component 2: Communication and Information Management

Emergency management and incident response activities rely on resilient and redundant communications and information systems to provide a common operating picture to all command and coordination sites. Effective communication is the key to incident management. This is especially true in natural hazard emergencies (e.g., floods, wildfires, tornadoes, etc.) where rapid changes may permit only short lead-time warnings requiring an immediate, educated response.

Guideline 2.1: NWS Warning and Information Reception

To receive recognition under the StormReady Program, an applying jurisdiction's Communication/Dispatch Center and EOC each need multiple ways to receive NWS warnings. A combination of the following can be used by the Communication/Dispatch Center and EOC to fulfill this guideline:

- **Public Alert™ certified NOAA Weather Radio receiver**: Required for recognition *only* if within reliable reception range of a NWR transmitter
- **National Warning System (NAWAS) drop**: FEMA-controlled, 24-hour, continuous-private-line telephone system used to convey warnings to federal, state and local governments, as well as the military and civilian population
- **NWSChat**: An instant messaging program available via the Internet used by NWS operational personnel to share critical warning decision expertise and other significant weather information
- **Emergency Management Weather Information Network (EMWIN) receiver**: Device that receives satellite feed and/or VHF radio transmission of NWS products
- **Statewide law enforcement telecommunications:** Automatic relay of NWS products on law enforcement systems
- **Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA):** A service that allows public safety authorities to use FEMA's IPAWS Open Platform for Emergency Networks (IPAWS-OPEN) to send geographically targeted, text-like wireless emergency alerts to the public
- **Amateur Radio transceiver:** Potential communications directly to NWS office
- **Alerts received through an AWCI provider:** Typically received via email, a texting service or app to a smartphone, tablet, or computer
- **Television:** Access to local network or cable TV
- **Local Radio:** Emergency Alert System, LP1/LP2
- **Internet monitoring capability, including social media such as Facebook and Twitter**
- **NOAA Weather Wire drop:** Satellite downlink data feed from NWS.
- **Other Communications channel:** For example, active participation in a state-run warning network, two-way, local emergency responder radio network, etc

Guideline 2.2: Warning Dissemination

To receive recognition under the StormReady Program, an applying jurisdiction's Communication/Dispatch Center and EOC each need the authority and ability to activate the public warning system in its area of responsibility. A combination of the following can be used to fulfill this guideline:

- Cable and/or broadcast television audio/video EAS overrides
- Local flood warning systems with no single point of failure
- Plan for siren/megaphone notification on emergency vehicles
- Outdoor warning sirens
- Other local alert broadcast system
- Local pager/texting system
- WEA capability throughout the jurisdiction
- Social media account and plan for usage

- Amateur Radio Operator network (Ham Radio)
- Telephone mass notification system
- Telephone tree to critical facilities
- Coordinated jurisdiction-wide radio network
- Service provided by AWCI
- Other, please explain
- *Counties, Parishes, Boroughs, etc.* - A countywide communications network that ensures the flow of information between all cities and towns within its borders. This would include acting as the surrogate WP and/or EOC for jurisdictions without those capabilities.

In addition to the above, when in reliable range of a NWR transmitter, Public Alert™ certified NOAA Weather Radio receivers are required to be operated in key public facilities to be recognized as StormReady:

- **Required Locations:**
  - Communication/Dispatch Center serving as the 24-hour WP
  - EOC
  - City Hall
  - Public School Superintendent office

- **Recommended, but not required, Locations:**
  - Courthouses
  - Public libraries
  - Hospitals
  - All schools, usually located in principal's or designee office
  - Fairgrounds, parks and recreation areas*
  - Public utilities*
  - Large-event venues, e.g., arenas, stadiums, etc.*
  - Transportation departments*
  - Nursing homes/Assisted living facilities*
  - Harbor Masters' Offices

*__Note__: Usually, the NWR receivers would be located in the primary management office/facility that has the authority to alter operations and the ability to order protective actions based on the NWS hazardous weather or flood warning received.

Guideline 2.3: Hazardous Weather and Flood Monitoring

To receive recognition under the StormReady Program, an applying jurisdiction's Communication/Dispatch Center and EOC each need the ability to monitor for hazardous weather and flood conditions. Staff should have a basic understanding of weather and flood data, monitoring equipment, and information systems. Examples include Doppler weather radar data, the NWS Advanced Hydrologic Prediction System, roadway condition sensors, etc. Understanding how to use hazardous weather and flood monitoring tools enhances the situation awareness of the Communication/Dispatch Center and EOC. It also strengthens the coordination

with the NWS, other jurisdictions, the news media and the public. A combination of the following can be used to fulfill this guideline:

- NWSChat
- Hazardous weather and flood monitoring systems provided by AWCI
- Internet
- Video camera system
- Television/radio
- Two-way radio
- EMWIN
- Local systems for hazardous weather monitoring, e.g., roadway sensors
- Local systems for flood monitoring, e.g., levee/dam sensors, wildfire burn areas
- Locally owned and operated weather radar
- Lightning detection network
- Locally owned weather observing instruments, e.g., wind equipment
- Other, please explain

Guideline 2.4: Communication

To facilitate close working relationships, the jurisdiction's emergency management program leader should routinely communicate with his/her local NWS WFO. NWS officials should also routinely communicate with the emergency management officials in their CWFA. Typically this will occur during incident operations between the Communication/Dispatch Center and the local NWS WFO. This communication also might occur through joint preparedness activities, conferences or other events. Annual meetings are encouraged, in-person or virtually. If a jurisdiction chooses to use services provided by AWCI, the WFO will interact/coordinate with the jurisdiction's service provider in the same way it would interact with the applicant or StormReady community once recognized.

In addition to the above examples, jurisdictions should have an interoperable communications network that ensures the ability to communicate within and across jurisdictions through resilient and redundant methods. Resiliency is the ability of communications systems to withstand and continue to perform after damage or loss of infrastructure. Redundancy can be the duplication of services or the ability to communicate through diverse, alternative methods when standard capabilities suffer damage.

During an incident within a jurisdiction, this integrated approach links the operational and support units of the various organizations to maintain communications connectivity and situation awareness. When a single incident covers a large geographical area, multiple local emergency management and incident response agencies may be required. This may include nongovernmental organizations and private-sector organizations. Effective cross-jurisdictional coordination using processes and systems is critical in this situation.

Component 3: Preparedness

Effective emergency management and incident response activities begin with a host of preparedness activities conducted on an ongoing basis, in advance of any potential incident. Preparedness is achieved and maintained through a continuous cycle of planning, organizing, training, equipping, exercising, evaluating, and taking corrective action. Ongoing preparedness efforts among all those involved in emergency management and incident response activities ensure effective coordination during crisis. In developing, refining, and expanding preparedness programs and activities within their jurisdictions and/or organizations, emergency management/response personnel should leverage existing preparedness efforts and collaborative relationships to the greatest extent possible.

Guideline 3.1: Planning

To receive recognition under the StormReady Program, an applying jurisdiction should address hazardous weather and flooding in its formal EOP. Ideally, hazardous weather and flooding is also addressed in the community's Local Hazards Mitigation Plan. If possible, the EOP should:

- Identify hazards and provide a risk assessment
- Detail Communication/Dispatch Center procedures relating to natural hazards
- Specify EOC activation criteria and deactivation procedures
- Identify flood prone areas, set procedures to prevent citizens from entering those areas, and set evacuation protocols and procedures
- Establish SKYWARN weather spotter activation criteria and reporting procedures
- Specify criteria and procedures for the activation of the public warning system in its area of responsibility
- Provide contact information for all jurisdictional agencies and response partners including the NWS
- Maintain the ability to assess significant hazardous weather and flood incidents through an After Action Review (or similar), identify lessons learned and best practices, and evolve emergency response planning accordingly

Guideline 3.2: Training and Exercises

To receive recognition under the StormReady Program, an applying jurisdiction should conduct an exercise relating to natural hazards at least every three years. Participation in a multi-jurisdiction exercise (e.g., state, regional, federal, etc.) may fulfill this requirement. It is not necessary for your local NWS office to participate in the exercise but NWS participation is encouraged when feasible. Exercises should test and evaluate functions contained in the EOP. The following exercise types may be conducted to fulfill this guideline:

- **Tabletop:** Simulates an emergency situation in an informal, stress-free environment. The participants, —usually decision-makers—gather around a table to discuss general problems and procedures in the context of an emergency scenario. The tabletop focus is on training and familiarization with roles, procedures, or responsibilities.

- **Functional:** Simulates an emergency in the most realistic manner possible, short of moving real people and equipment to an actual site. As the name suggests, its goal is to test or evaluate the capability of one or more functions in the context of an emergency event.
- **Full-scale:** A lengthy exercise that takes place on location, using—as far as possible—the equipment and personnel that would be called upon in a real event. Typically a full-scale exercise will use most EOP functions, coordinate the efforts of several agencies, and include activation of the EOC.

To receive recognition under the StormReady Program, an applying jurisdiction should conduct training for Communication/Dispatch Center and EOC staff (e.g., dispatchers) at least once every two years. The Communication/Dispatch Center should receive training on the following:

- Understanding NWS decision support services
- Monitoring hazardous weather and flood incidents
- Using protocols for communicating hazardous weather and flood incident impacts and damage to inform the NWS' warning decision making.

Any training tool (e.g., web module, Webinar, presentation, instruction manual) can fulfill this guideline though local NWS WFO participation in the development and implementation of the training is desirable. Typically this training can be accomplished by attending a class for SKYWARN weather spotters conducted by the local NWS WFO. StormReady communities are expected to share hazardous weather and flood reports with their local NWS WFO. Using NWSChat or a similar communication tool is ideal for this type of coordination. At a minimum, these reports should include the type, location, and time of significant weather and flood events.

An applying jurisdiction also needs to conduct training for SKYWARN weather spotters at least once every two years. Typically this guideline is handled by the local NWS WFO through in-person training classes open to the public and with support from the emergency manager. All jurisdictions larger than 40,000 people are encouraged to host/co-host a spotter training session at least once every two years.

Guideline 3.3: Community Preparedness

To receive recognition under the StormReady Program, an applying jurisdiction needs to conduct a number of hazardous weather and/or flood safety activities each year. Public education is vital in preparing citizens to respond properly to hazardous weather and flooding. An educated public is more likely to take steps to plan for hazardous weather and flooding, recognize potentially threatening weather situations, receive warnings, and to respond appropriately in those situations. A combination of the following preparedness activities can be used to fulfill this guideline:

- Conduct or facilitate safety talks/presentations for schools, hospitals, nursing homes, and industries regarding the identified weather hazards for the area. These talks may be a part of multi-hazard presentations affecting local communities/regions, e.g., floods, wildfires, tsunamis, tornadoes, hurricanes/typhoons, blizzards;

- Offer weather-related safety awareness campaigns that include publicity for NOAA Weather Radio (where broadcast coverage exists), WEA, and other local public warning systems;

- Assist schools, hospitals, businesses, industries, etc., with the development of risk assessments, mitigation measures and emergency planning, e.g., help determine effective sheltering and evacuation procedures;

- Establish and maintain a community program that includes hazardous weather and flooding in its training, e.g., Citizens Corps, Community Emergency Response Teams;

- Participate in the Emergency Management Accreditation Program (EMAP). EMAP is a voluntary review process for state and local emergency management programs. Accreditation is a means of demonstrating, through self-assessment, documentation and peer review, that a program meets national standards for emergency management programs;

- Participate in a state, end-to-end communications test of the hazardous weather and flooding warning system. This includes activation of the EAS within your jurisdiction using a TOR or FFW real event code;

- Conduct full-scale exercise for hazardous weather and/or flooding with community involvement;

- Implement/maintain a program to help the special needs populations in your jurisdiction prepare for and respond to hazardous weather and flooding, e.g., neighbor helping neighbor program;

- Post hazardous weather and flood safety information, including information on NOAA Weather Radio and WEA and other local public warning systems, on community websites, e.g., agency, organization, facility;

- Issue Public Service Announcements on hazardous weather and flood safety. PSAs could be sent through radio, TV, social media, etc.;

- Post hazardous weather and flood safety information on signs in your jurisdiction, e.g., billboard, highway, large outdoor video screens;

- Conduct mass mailings of hazardous weather and/or flood safety information to local residents and businesses;

- Conduct workshops with local businesses (e.g., Chamber of Commerce, business associations) to help them develop their own hazardous weather and flood mitigation strategies, emergency operations, and recovery plans;

- Conduct presentations or workshops on hazardous weather and flooding with faith-based organizations, community, and civic groups, e.g., Rotary, Kiwanis, Moose, Elks, Ruritans, Scout Troops;

- Provide hazardous weather and/or flood safety information through the local tourist industry, e.g., hotels, motels, camp grounds, restaurants, community visitor centers, recreational services, vehicle rental businesses, museums;

- Incorporate hazardous weather and flood safety information into booths at community events, county fairs, trade shows, etc.;

- Other, please explain

APPENDIX B - StormReady Recognition Sign

Above: NWS StormReady Recognition sign.