



NEWS FROM NOAA

NATIONAL OCEANIC & ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION • US DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

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NOAA'S NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE DECLARES PIMA COUNTY, ARIZ., STORMREADY

Officials from NOAA's National Weather Service praised the emergency management team from Pima County, Ariz., for completing a set of rigorous warning criteria necessary to earn the StormReady distinction.

“StormReady encourages communities to take a new, proactive approach to improving local hazardous weather operations and public awareness,” said Tom Evans, warning coordination meteorologist at the National Weather Service forecast office in Tucson. “StormReady arms communities with improved communication and safety skills needed to save lives and property – before and during the event.”

The nationwide community preparedness program uses a grassroots approach to help communities develop plans to handle local severe weather and flooding threats. The program is voluntary and provides communities with clear-cut advice from a partnership between local National Weather Service forecast offices and state and local emergency managers. StormReady started in 1999 with seven communities in the Tulsa, Okla., area. There now are 1,390 StormReady communities throughout the United States.

Glen Sampson, meteorologist-in-charge of the Tucson forecast office, today presented a recognition letter and special StormReady signs to county officials at the Pima County Board of Supervisors meeting. The StormReady recognition will be in effect for three years, after which the county will go through a renewal process.

“Every year, around 500 Americans lose their lives to severe weather and floods,” said Dr. Jack Hayes, director of NOAA’s National Weather Service. “More than 10,000 severe thunderstorms, 2,500 floods and 1,000 tornadoes impact the United States annually, and hurricanes are a threat to the Gulf and East Coasts. Potentially deadly weather can affect every person in the country. That’s why NOAA's National Weather Service developed the StormReady program.”

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To be recognized as StormReady, a community must:

- Establish a 24-hour warning point and emergency operations center;
- Have more than one way to receive severe weather forecasts and warnings and to alert the public;
- Create a system that monitors local weather conditions;
- Promote the importance of public readiness through community seminars;
- Develop a formal hazardous weather plan, which includes training severe weather spotters and holding emergency exercises.

“The United States is the most severe weather-prone region of the world. The mission of the National Weather Service is to reduce the loss of life and property from these storms, and StormReady will help us create better prepared communities throughout the country,” Evans said.

“Just like communities, families need to be prepared for hazardous weather by having an action plan. Through StormReady, the National Weather Service educates Americans about what to do when severe weather strikes, because it is ultimately everyone’s responsibility to protect themselves,” added Sampson.

The National Weather Service is an office of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, an agency of the U.S. Commerce Department. NOAA is dedicated to enhancing economic security and national safety through the prediction and research of weather and climate-related events and providing environmental stewardship of our nation’s coastal and marine resources. Through the emerging Global Earth Observation System of Systems (GEOSS), NOAA is working with its federal partners and more than 60 countries to develop a global monitoring network that is as integrated as the planet it observes.

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On the Web:

NOAA: <http://www.noaa.gov>

NOAA’s National Weather Service: <http://www.weather.gov>

StormReady sign and program information: <http://www.stormready.noaa.gov>

National Weather Service in Tucson: <http://weather.gov/tucson>

NOTE: Media interested in interviews with the Tucson Weather Forecast Office may contact Glen Sampson, Meteorologist in Charge, at (520) 670-5156, ext. 222.