

2009: The Year of StormReady



Senior Forecaster Mike Cantin presents Hardee County Emergency Manager Rich Shepard with his StormReady certificate.

In 1999 the National Weather Service created the StormReady program to encourage hazardous weather preparedness, safety, and mitigation. This program's largest participant is county Emergency Management. In the state Florida all counties are recognized as StormReady. To become recognized as such county Emergency Management and first responders must meet rigorous requirements which include emergency action plans, methods of receiving and disseminating hazardous weather information, community outreach, and building and nurturing strong relationships with their local National Weather Service office.

Three years ago the staff at WFO Tampa Bay Area, FL and area emergency management worked very hard to ensure that each county in southwestern Florida became recognized as StormReady. This effort grew strong partnerships, and helped to ensure that everyone is best prepared when hazardous weather threatens. Today, your local emergency management community and the National Weather Service continue to strengthen their partnership, while finding new ways to keep you safe.

StormReady recognition expires after 3 years, with a re-certification process mandatory. This year nearly all of the counties across southwestern FL require this re-certification. A dedicated team of meteorologists have been organized to expedite this process, with Warning Coordination Meteorologist Dan Noah in the lead.

For more information about the StormReady program visit: www.stormready.noaa.gov.