Application Instructions

(Updated May 2001)

Any county or community desiring to be considered for StormReady recognition must complete the attached Application Form and submit it to the Warning Coordination Meteorologist of the NWS office serving that jurisdiction. The WCM will review the application, discuss it with the submitting official (if necessary), and forward the application to the Georgia StormReady Advisory Board Chairperson.

Upon receipt of the application, the Advisory Board will assign a team to visit the jurisdiction and formally discuss the application with the applicant. During the site visit, a review of the applicant's hazardous weather plan will occur. This review may require the applicant to explain procedures to ensure that the content meets StormReady Guidelines.

Upon completion of the site visit, the verification team will forward their findings to the StormReady Advisory Board. The Board will then review the applications, the verification team's comments, and then decide on StormReady recognition for the applying jurisdiction.

Some applicants will have jurisdiction over both a community and the unincorporated areas of the surrounding county. In these cases, a single application is sufficient, with the combined populations used as a basis for determining the appropriate guideline categories.

While much of the application is a basic accounting of technology, a brief narrative describing aspects of preparedness and planning activities is necessary and will aid in assessing such things as the hazardous weather plan, exercises, and public safety programs.

Use the explanations in the following pages to complete the attached Application Form. For answers to questions regarding the Application Form or the application process, please contact your supporting NWS Warning Coordination Meteorologist.

StormReady Population-Based Criteria

Since the tax base typically dictates the resources applied to public programs, the criteria for successful participation in the StormReady Program are based on population. Although subject to later refinement, four population categories will be used for developing appropriate recognition criteria related to weather disaster preparedness. The population-based categories are:

Criteria	Population			
	< 2,500	2,500 - 14,999	15,000 - 40,000	> 40,000
Criterion 1: Communications				
Established 24 hr Warning Point (WP)	Local WP	X	X	X
Established Emergency Operations Center		X	X	X
Minimum number (average) of severe weather reports relayed to NWS per event.	1	1	1	1
Criterion 2: NWS Information Reception				
Number of ways for EOC/WP to receive NWS warning, etc (If in range, one *must* be NWR-SAME)	3	4	4	4
Criterion 3: Hydrometeorological Monitoring				
Number of ways to monitor Hydro-meteorological data.	1 (WP)	1 (WP) 2 (EOC)	1 (WP) 3 (EOC)	1 (WP) 4 (EOC)
Criterion 4: Local Warning Dissemination				
Number of ways for EOC/WP to disseminate warnings	1	2	3	4
NWR - SAME receivers in public facilities[2]	X	X	X	X
Criterion 5: Community Preparedness				
Number of annual weather safety talks	1	2	3	4
Spotters and dispatchers trained biennially	X	X	X	X
Host / co-host annual NWS spotter training				X
Criterion 6: Administrative				
Formal hazardous weather operations plan	X	X	X	X
Biennial visits by emergency manager to NWS office	X	X	X	X
Annual visits by NWS official to community	X	X	X	X

Criterion 1: Communications & Coordination Center

The key to disaster management is effective communication. This is especially true in weather emergencies where rapid changes may permit only short lead-time warnings that require an immediate, educated response.

1. 24-Hour Warning Point. To receive recognition under the StormReady Program, an applying agency will need to have a 24-hour warning point (WP) that can receive NWS information and provide local reports and advice. Typically, this might be a law enforcement or fire department dispatching point. For cities or towns without a local dispatching point, a county agency could act in that capacity for them. The warning point will need to have:

< 24 hour operations.

< Warning reception capability.

< Warning dissemination capability.

< Ability and authority to activate local warning system(s).

2. Emergency Operations Center. Agencies serving jurisdictions larger than 2,500 people will need an emergency operations center (EOC). The EOC will need to be staffed during hazardous weather events and, when staffed, would assume the warning point's hazardous weather functions. The following summarizes the weather-related roles of an EOC:

< May assume weather-related duties of warning point, when staffed.

< Activated based on predetermined guidelines related to NWS information and/or weather events.

< Staffed with emergency management director or designee.

< Warning reception capability.

< Ability and authority to activate local warning system(s). Must have capabilities equal to or better than the warning point.

< Ability to communicate with adjacent EOCs/Warning Points.

< Established communications link with NWS to relay real time weather information to support the warning decision making process.

3. Severe Weather Information Exchange

Rapid exchange of weather information between essential parties ensures the success of the warning program. This information exchange includes the provision of either relayed severe weather reports to the NWS from the 24 hour Warning Point or EOC, or directly from spotters or other individuals affiliated with the Emergency Management Agency.

The effectiveness of severe weather reports is largely dependent upon their accuracy and timeliness. A severe weather report shall be considered timely if received by the NWS within five (5) minutes of the occurrence of the event. This does not diminish the need for important follow-up reports of storm damage which may be received hours or even days after storm occurrence. NWS offices maintain logs of severe weather reports which will be used in determining the number of timely severe weather reports received from a given community. StormReady recognition requires meeting the minimum number of timely severe weather reports required for a given population. This number is an average determined over a 2 year period.

Criterion 2: National Weather Service Warning Reception

Warning points and EOCs each need multiple ways to receive NWS warnings. The StormReady Program criteria for receiving NWS warnings in an EOC/WP require a combination of the following, based on population (see Appendix A):

< NOAA Weather Radio receiver with Specific Area Message Encoding (NWR-SAME): *Required for recognition, if within range of transmitter.*

< NOAA Weather Wire drop: Satellite downlink data feed from NWS.

< Emergency Management Weather Information Network (EMWIN) receiver: Satellite feed and/or VHF radio transmission of NWS products.

< Statewide law enforcement telecommunications: Automatic relay of NWS products on law enforcement systems.

< Amateur Radio transceiver: Potential communications directly to NWS office

< Pagers: From a provider not directly tied to a local system such as EMWIN.

< Television: Local network or cable TV.

< Local Radio (Emergency Alert System - LP1/LP2).

< Other: For example, active participation in a state-run warning network.

< National Warning System (NAWAS) drop: FEMA-controlled civil defense hotline.

Criterion 3: Hydrometeorological Monitoring

While receipt of warnings is crucial to the success of any EOC or warning point, there should also be a means of monitoring weather information, especially radar data. To obtain StormReady Program recognition, each EOC/WP (based on population) should have some combination of the following recommended means of gathering ancillary weather information:

< Local network or cable TV.

- Internet access to radar data.
- Dedicated radar data feed from NEXRAD vendor or local TV station.
- Instruments to provide a measure of local conditions and/or hydrologic conditions (cannot be the sole means of hydrometeorological monitoring) i.e. wind equipment, river gages etc.
- Locally owned and operated weather radar.

Criterion 4: Warning Dissemination

Once NWS warnings are received, or local information suggests an imminent weather threat, the goal of the local emergency officials should be to communicate with as much of the population as possible. Receiving StormReady recognition will be contingent upon having one or more of the following means of ensuring timely warning dissemination to citizens (based on population):

- A community program that subsidizes the purchase of NWR-SAME receivers, provided a NOAA Weather Radio signal can be received.
- At least one NWR-SAME receiver in each government-owned building that is accessed by the public, such as schools, hospitals, and administrative buildings (provided a signal can be received). Local ordinances are recommended to ensure this.
- Cable television audio/video overrides.
- Local Flood warning systems with no single point of failure.
- Other locally-controlled methods like a local broadcast system or sirens on emergency vehicles.
- Outdoor warning sirens.
- *Counties Only:* A County-wide communications network that ensures the flow of information between all cities and towns within its borders. This would include acting as a warning point for the smaller towns.

Criterion 5: Preparedness

Public education is vital in preparing citizens to respond properly to weather threats. An educated public most likely will take steps to receive weather warnings, recognize potentially threatening weather situations, and act appropriately to those situations. Agencies seeking recognition in the StormReady Program will need to:

- Conduct or facilitate safety talks for schools, hospitals, nursing homes and industries (number of talks per year will be based on population).

< Accomplish weather-related safety campaigns which include publicity for NOAA Weather Radios where coverage exists.

Criterion 6: Administrative

No program can be successful without formal planning and proactive administration. To be recognized in the StormReady Program:

Approved hazardous weather action plans will need to be in place. These plans will need to address, at a minimum, the following:

< Warning point procedures.

< EOC activation criteria and procedures.

< Storm spotter activation criteria and reporting procedures.

< Storm spotter roster and training record.

< Criteria and procedures for activation of sirens, cable television override, and/or local systems activation in accordance with state Emergency Alert System (EAS) plans.

< Annual exercises.

EOC/Warning point staff and field personnel will need to attend NWS storm spotter training sessions at least every other year. All jurisdictions larger than 40,000 people will need to host/co-host a spotter training session every year.

To facilitate close working relationships, the community/county emergency management program leader will need to visit the supporting NWS office at least every other year. NWS officials will commit to visit accredited counties, cities, and towns annually to tour EOCs/Warning points and meet with key officials.

Community Information			
Applying County/City/Town:		**Population**	

Other Incorporated Municipalities in County	**Population**	**Other Incorporated Municipalities in County**	**Population**

Primary Point of Contact		**Secondary Point of Contact**	
Name		Name	
Title		Title	
Phone		Phone	
Email		Email	

Criterion 1: Communications	
Location of 24 Hour Warning Point	**Location of Emergency Operations Center**

Number of Severe Weather Reports Relayed or Made Directly to the NWS in the past 2 Years		
Note: This section will be completed by the National Weather Service Office serving your area.	Number of Reports	
	Number of Events	
	Average Number of Reports per Event	

Criterion 2: NWS Information Reception			
Warning Reception Capabilities and Locations (Indicate which listed capabilities are available at the Warning Point and/or EOC.)		**Warning Point**	**EOC**
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			
List any additional capabilities on a separate sheet if necessary			

Criterion 3: Weather & Water Monitoring			
Weather and Water Monitoring Capabilities and Locations (Indicate which listed capabilities are available at the Warning Point and/or EOC.)		**Warning Point**	**EOC**
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
List any additional capabilities on a separate sheet if necessary			

Criterion 4: Local Warning Dissemination			
Warning Dissemination Capabilities and Locations (Indicate which listed capabilities are available at the Warning Point and/or EOC.)		**Warning Point**	**EOC**
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
List any additional capabilities on a separate sheet if necessary			

Criterion 4: Local Warning Dissemination (cont.)				
Local Government Owned Buildings with Public Access				
	Building	Location	NOAA Weather Radio-SAME	Comments
1			G Yes G No	
2			G Yes G No	
3			G Yes G No	
4			G Yes G No	
5			G Yes G No	
6			G Yes G No	
List any additional capabilities on a separate sheet if necessary				

Criterion 5: Community Preparedness	
Number of Annual Safety Talks *(Indicate Topic, Location, and Presenter)*	
1	
2	
3	
4	
List any additional safety talks on a separate sheet if necessary	

Other Community Preparedness Activities *(Indicate Activity, Location, and Organizer)*	
1	
2	
3	
4	

List any additional safety talks on a separate sheet if necessary

Criterion 6: Administrative Tools/Recordkeeping	
Formal Hazardous Weather Operations Plan	G Yes G No
Spotter Roster and Training Record	G Yes G No
Spotter Activation Criteria	G Yes G No
Local Warning System(s) Activation Criteria	G Yes G No
Last Visit by Emergency Manager to NWS Office	
Last Visit by NWS Officials to Community	
Annual Exercise Topic and Date	
Last NWS Spotter Training for Spotters and Dispatchers	
Last NWS Spotter Training Hosted/Co-Hosted *(For populations >40,000)*	
List any additional descriptions, narratives, or documentation on a separate sheet if necessary.	

Application submitted by (print name):	
Signature:	Date:
National Weather Service WCM receiving application:	Date: