

NOAA Strategic Priority

Building a Weather-Ready Nation

NOAA's Weather-Ready Nation is about building community resilience in the face of increasing vulnerability to extreme weather and water events.

Record-breaking snowfall, cold temperatures, extended drought, high heat, severe flooding, violent tornadoes, and massive hurricanes have all combined to reach the greatest number of multi-billion dollar weather disasters in the nation's history.

The devastating impacts of extreme events can be reduced through improved readiness, which is why the Weather-Ready Nation initiative is so important. Through substantial operational initiatives focused on demand-driven support services and supported by innovative technology and strategic training of our workforce, NOAA's National Weather Service is transforming its operations to better help America respond.

In the end, emergency managers, first responders, government officials, businesses and the public will be empowered to make fast, smart decisions to save lives and livelihoods.

The Vision

The vision to build a Weather-Ready Nation is defined in NOAA National Weather Service's Strategic Plan. And, like any effective vision, it is accompanied by specific and tangible actions.



As outlined in the NWS Roadmap to a Weather-Ready Nation, the myriad actions taken internally and with partners will translate the Strategic Plan into real-life actions that save lives and livelihoods.



In addition to saving lives and livelihoods, the goals of the Strategic Plan include improvements in a wide range of areas to support management of the nation's water supply, understanding of climate-related risks, economic productivity, healthy communities and ecosystems.

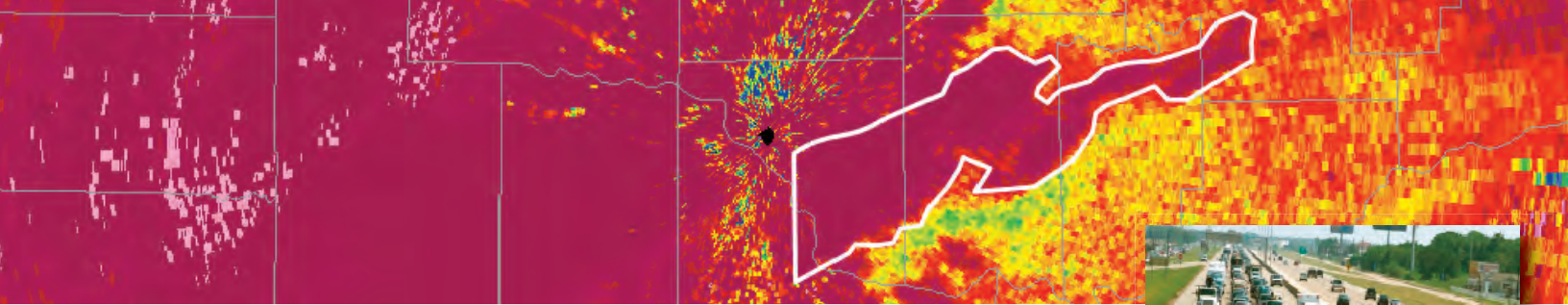
The Action

Accomplishing these goals means important changes for NOAA. We're not just improving the precision of forecasts and warnings; we're communicating that risk more effectively through the integration of social and behavioral sciences research.

Building on past successes in decision support services, the National Weather Service is launching community-based pilot projects across the country, ranging in focus from emergency response to integrated environmental services, to enhance the nation's preparedness. NOAA's Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research and National Environmental Satellite, Data, and Information Service are moving new science and technology into weather service operations that will improve forecasts, increase lead time and ultimately increase weather-readiness.

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The nationwide implementation of Dual Pol radar technology, the Hurricane Forecast Improvement Program (HFIP), a new National Water Center and Integrated Water Resources Science and Services, and the Joint Polar Satellite System are several upgrades already underway.

The Dialogue

Building a Weather-Ready Nation starts with these internal actions, but requires the participation and commitment of a vast nationwide network of partners including other government agencies and emergency managers, researchers, the media, insurance industry, non-profits, the private sector, the Weather Enterprise and more.

The national dialog engages stakeholders in assessing why the nation is experiencing such extreme impacts. The goal of the dialog is to support the mission of the National Weather Service by reducing risk and increasing community resilience for future extreme events.

Through a series of symposiums, participants will identify, prioritize, and set in motion actions to improve the nation's resiliency against severe weather.



The Future

All of these actions fall under the umbrella of Weather-Ready Nation.

And all support the same end goal: better information for better decisions.



Imagine some of the scenarios that will be possible in a Weather-Ready Nation...

- ▶ When a mother in Oklahoma hears a tornado warning detailing the intensity and track of the tornado, she understands that she should go to the basement now, not in a half hour.
- ▶ When a hurricane strikes in Louisiana, emergency managers will have a new level of support from emergency response specialists.
- ▶ Forecasts will focus on impacts. For example, “two inches of snow an hour” may become “roads will be impassable due to heavy snowfall during rush hour.”
- ▶ Environmental forecasts will help people manage chronic respiratory illnesses such as asthma.

Ultimately, a Weather-Ready Nation is one of people empowered to make life-saving decisions that also prevent devastating economic losses. It's all of us working together to become a nation known for its resiliency in the face of deadly weather and water events.

For more information, visit the Weather-Ready Nation site at www.noaa.gov/wrn.

To learn more about NOAA, visit www.noaa.gov 