

# Chicago Area StormReady Supporter Guidelines

## ***Guideline 1: Communications & Coordination Center***

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

1. Warning Point. To receive recognition under the StormReady Supporter Program, an applying entity will need to have a warning point that can receive and disseminate NWS information and provide local reports. Typically, this might be a security office or emergency response team.

The warning point will need to have:

- < Presence for all hours that the facility is staffed and operational.
- < Warning reception capability.
- < Warning dissemination capability.
- < Ability and authority to activate local warning system(s).

2. Real-Time Storm Reports. An integral part of the warning decision making process is timely reports of real-time weather information. StormReady Supporter entities must relay reports of severe weather (hail, wind damage, flash flooding, tornado or funnel cloud sighting) to the local or county emergency management agency or National Weather Service forecast office. At a minimum, these reports should include the type, location and time of significant severe weather events.

## ***Guideline 2: National Weather Service Warning Reception***

Warning points need redundant ways to receive NWS warnings. The StormReady Supporter Program guidelines for receiving NWS warnings require a NOAA Weather Radio receiver with tone alert. Specific Area Message Encoding is preferred. In addition, at least one of the following:

- < Emergency Management Weather Information Network (EMWIN) receiver: Satellite feed and/or VHF radio transmission of NWS products.
- < Wireless Devices: 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, community or county emergency management agency warning system such as an alert radio, phone call, etc.

## ***Guideline 3: Hydrometeorological Monitoring***

While receipt of warnings is crucial to the success of any warning point, there should also be a means of monitoring weather information, especially radar data. To obtain StormReady Supporter recognition, the warning point should have at least one of the following recommended means of gathering ancillary weather information:

- < Internet
- < Television/radio
- < Emergency Management Weather Information Network (EMWIN)
- < Local systems for monitoring weather such as a weather station

#### ***Guideline 4: Warning Dissemination***

Once NWS warnings are received, or local information suggests an imminent weather threat, the goal of the warning point should be to communicate with as much of the population as possible. Receiving StormReady Supporter recognition will be contingent upon having at least one of the following means of ensuring timely warning dissemination to people at the facility:

- < Pagers
- < Pop-up message on facility computer network
- < Intercom, alarms, sign boards, flashing lights, etc.

#### ***Guideline 5: Facility Preparedness***

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

- < Conduct or facilitate safety talks for staff
- < Have trained storm spotters at the facility who attend NWS storm spotter training sessions at least every other year.
- < Have designated tornado shelter areas at the facility.

#### ***Guideline 6: Administrative***

No program can be successful without formal planning and pro-active administration. To be recognized in the StormReady Supporter 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 relating to natural hazards.
- < Hazards/risk assessment
- < Storm spotter activation criteria and reporting procedures.

- < Storm spotter roster and training record.
- < Criteria and procedures for activation of local warning systems.
- < Annual exercises relating to natural hazard.