



NEWS FROM NOAA

NATIONAL OCEANIC & ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION • US DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Contact: Judith Levan (716) 565-9001
Warning Coordination Meteorologist
National Weather Service, Buffalo NY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
09/24/07

NOAA'S NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE RENEWS OSWEGO COUNTY STORMREADY STATUS

Officials from NOAA's National Weather Service today praised Oswego County, New York for continuing to meet a set of rigorous warning criteria necessary to maintain the distinction of being StormReady®.

"StormReady encourages communities to take a new, proactive approach to improving local hazardous weather operations and public awareness," said Judith Levan, warning coordination meteorologist at the National Weather Service Weather Forecast Office in Buffalo, New York. "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 are now more than 1,080 StormReady communities across the country.

At the Oswego County Legislature's Public Safety and Emergency Services Committee meeting today, Thomas Niziol, meteorologist-in-charge of the NWS Forecast Office in Buffalo, presented a recognition letter and special StormReady plaque.

"We're pleased to be re-designated a StormReady Community," said Patricia Egan, Director of the Oswego County Emergency Management Office. "We take very seriously the need to be prepared for all hazards that might occur. Severe weather – winter storms, potential flooding, high winds, and so forth – is just one of the threats we face throughout the year."

Egan praised members of the Oswego County Emergency Communicators, a group of amateur radio operators that assist the Emergency Management Office with back-up communications during emergencies. Members of the group who served on the county's StormReady Re-application Committee include Radio Officer John Darling, K2QQY; Skywarn Coordinator Brien Mathews, KA2AON; Don Gardner, W2VIV; Fred Koch, KA2HPG; Bob LaMay, WA2AFF; and Judy LaMay.

"Every year, around 500 Americans lose their lives to severe weather and

floods,” said Brig. Gen. David L. Johnson, USAF (Ret.), 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.”

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,” Judith Levan said.

“Just like communities, families need to be storm ready by having an action plan for severe weather. Through StormReady, the National Weather Service plans to educate every American about what to do when severe weather strikes because it is ultimately each individual’s responsibility to protect him or herself,” Judith Levan said.

In 2007 NOAA, an agency of the U.S. Commerce Department, celebrates 200 years of science and service to the nation. Starting with the establishment of the U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey in 1807 by Thomas Jefferson much of America’s scientific heritage is rooted in NOAA. The agency is dedicated to enhancing economic security and national safety through the prediction and research of weather and climate-related events and information service delivery for transportation, and by 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, more than 60 countries and the European Commission to develop a global monitoring network that is as integrated as the planet it observes, predicts and protects.

More information about emergency preparedness is available by contacting the Oswego County Emergency Management Office, 315/591-9150 or www.oswegocounty.com/emo. More information about Oswego County Emergency Communicators is available at www.oswegoraces.org or by calling the Emergency Management Office.

###

On the Web:

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

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

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

NOAA Weather Radio All Hazards: <http://www.weather.gov/nwr>

NOAA’s StormReady program: <http://www.stormready.noaa.gov>

StormReady® is a registered trademark used by the National Weather Service.