

# New Jersey StormReady Criteria



## New Jersey 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.

Criteria	Population			
	< 2,500	2,500 - 14,999	15,000 - 40,000	> 40,000
<b>Criterion 1: Communications</b>				
Established 24 hr Warning Point (WP) <sup>1</sup>	Local WP	X	X	X
Established Emergency Operations Center		X	X	X
Ability to relay real-time storm reports to NWS	X	X	X	X
<b>Criterion 2: NWS Information Reception</b>				
Number of ways for EOC/WP to receive NWS warning, etc (If in range, one <i>must</i> be NWR-SAME)	3	4	4	4
<b>Criterion 3: Hydrometeorological Monitoring</b>				
Number of ways to monitor Hydrometeorological data.	1	2	3	4
<b>Criterion 4: Local Warning Dissemination</b>				
Number of ways EOC/WP to disseminate warnings	1	2	3	4
NWR-tone alert receivers in <i>municipally-owned buildings</i> <sup>2*</sup>	X	X	X	X
NWR-tone alert receivers in all school district offices <sup>3*</sup>	X	X	X	X
<b>Criterion 5: Community Preparedness</b>				
Number of annual weather safety talks	1	2	3	4
Spotters and dispatchers trained biennially <sup>4</sup>	X	X	X	X
<b>County to Host / co-host annual NWS spotter training</b>	X	X	X	X
<b>Criterion 6: Administrative</b>				
Formal hazardous weather operations plan	X	X	X	X
Biennial visits by EM to NWS office or attendance at a NWS of <i>NJOEM</i> function, workshop or training session	X	X	X	X
Annual visits by NWS official to community	X	X	X	X

<sup>1</sup> StormReady status is designated on a county basis, however any community that maintains an approved Public Safety Answering Point may also apply, and is subject to all conditions above (population based).

<sup>2</sup> A *municipal* building is defined as any building (owned, leased, or staffed), campus (co-located group of buildings that function together as a single entity), or other improved property used or maintained by the *municipal personnel*. Mandatory radios in all Court House, Public Safety Answering Points, EOCs, City Hall, and School Superintendent offices. It is strongly recommended that NWR be located in all *municipally-*

*owned/operated* Libraries, residential or custodial care facilities, Fairgrounds, Parks/rec areas, sport arenas, and Dept of Transportation Offices. Local boards have the authority to exclude/require radios for other municipal buildings. \* **NWR SAME receivers recommended**

3 When the StormReady designation is up for renewal the criteria will be 33% of schools (1st renewal), 66% of schools (2<sup>nd</sup> renewal), and 100% of schools (3rd renewal) with NOAA Weather Alert (SAME) radios.

4 All counties should have a minimum of 10 trained spotters.

## Appendix A StormReady Criteria

### ***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. 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.

## **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):

- < At least one NWR tone alert receiver in each county owned/operated building that is accessed by the public (this is required if a signal can be received). Mandatory NWR in all Court Houses, Public Safety Answering Points (PSAP), EOCs, City Halls, School Superintendent Offices. It is strongly recommended that NWR be located in all county owned/operated Libraries, residential or Custodial care facilities, Fairgrounds, Parks and recreation areas, Public Utilities, Sports Arenas and Stadiums, and Dep of Transportation offices. Additionally, all school district offices must have NWR-SAME receivers. Local boards have the authority to exclude/require radios for other county buildings.
- < A community program that subsidizes the purchase of NWR-SAME receivers, provided a NOAA Weather Radio signal can be received.
- < 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 pro-active 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.
- < Approved and concurrent EOP

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 or attend a NWS function, workshop or training session 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.