



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FORSYTH COUNTY'S STORM PREPAREDNESS
CONFIRMED WITH RECERTIFICATION

Forsyth County continues to be recognized as StormReady®

Forsyth County, Georgia – The National Weather Service (NWS) has re-recognized Forsyth County as a StormReady® Community, a designation reflecting the county's high level of severe weather preparedness. Forsyth County was first recognized as a StormReady® Community in 2007 and is currently one of 94 counties in Georgia to have earned this recognition.

To be deemed StormReady®, a community must meet criteria established jointly between the NWS and state and local emergency management officials, including having a local 24-hour warning point and an Emergency Operations Center, having more than one way to receive severe weather warnings and forecasts and to alert the public, being able to monitor weather conditions locally, promoting the importance of public readiness through community seminars and developing a formal hazardous weather plan, which includes training severe-weather spotters and holding emergency exercises.

The essence of the program is to ensure the entire warning system performs properly when severe weather strikes. The warning system is comprised of the NWS (which issues the warnings), local emergency management (which ensures the warnings are communicated) and the general public (who respond properly to the warnings). When each part of this system performs well, lives and property can be saved. StormReady® recognizes the communities in which the system is most likely to perform well.

Since the county's original certification as a StormReady® Community, Forsyth County has taken additional measures to prepare the community for severe weather. In 2009, the county activated new outdoor severe-weather sirens, designed to alert those who are outdoors that severe weather is in the area. If the county is placed under a tornado warning, the sirens will be activated. In 2012, five additional outdoor severe weather sirens were added, bringing the total number of county sirens to 17.

In 2011, the Forsyth County Emergency Management Agency began offering weather alert notifications and earlier this year transitioned to an enhanced and more user-friendly alert system. Forsyth County residents can sign up to receive time-sensitive alerts for three severe weather situations (severe thunderstorm warnings, flash flood warnings and tornado warnings) as well as for

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emergency situations such as public safety issues or important water notifications from the Forsyth County Water and Sewer Department. Residents can elect to be notified via telephone calls, emails and/or text messages. To sign up for the alerts, visit forsythco.com and look for 'Emergency & Weather Alerts' on the home page or text SWIFT911 to 99538 to download the Swift911 Public app.

For questions regarding the county's StormReady® designation and/or emergency and weather alerts, contact the Forsyth County Emergency Management Agency office at (770) 205-5674.

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