

Standard Operating Procedures:
“Section: A”

STORMREADY PROGRAM
TOWN OF SOUTHBOROUGH,
MASSACHUSETTS



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Introduction

StormReady is a grass roots program sponsored by the National Weather Service that focuses on improving communications and severe weather preparedness in communities. The program encourages communities to take a proactive approach to improving local hazardous weather operations. StormReady helps community leader and emergency managers strengthen local hazard mitigation and emergency response plans. Southborough is better prepared to meet the challenges of severe weather by having the best possible chance of being warned as early as possible before a weather disaster strikes, disseminating these warnings to the public and implementing pre-established preparedness and response plans.

On average, Americans cope with 10,000 thunderstorms, 2,500 floods, 1,000 tornados as well as an average of 6 deadly hurricanes each year. In addition, they are also affected by numerous snowstorms, periodic ice storms and extreme temperature events. Participating communities can now rely on the National Weather Service's StormReady program to help guard against the ravages of Mother Nature.

Nearly 90% of all Presidential declared disasters are weather related, leading to around 500 deaths per year and nearly \$14 billion in damage. StormReady, a program started in 1999 in Tulsa, Oklahoma, helps are America's Communities the communitarian and safety skills needed to save lives and property from the devastating effects of severe weather through improved planning, education and awareness. No community is storm proof, but StormReady can help communities save lives proven during the Van Wert, Ohio Tornado and numerous other locations.

StormReady is an active program! As of August 21, 2007, there were 1236 StormReady Sites in 50 states, Puerto Rico and Guam: 658 counties, 541 communities, 18 universities, 4 Indian Nations, 5 commercial sites, 9 military/government sites and 48 StormReady Supporters. Additionally there were 43 TsunamiReady sites in 10 states, Puerto Rico and Guam. Currently in Massachusetts there are 4 municipalities, 1 recreation park and 1 university certified into the StormReady Program.

Those living in Southern New England can be exposed to every type of severe weather threat known, the possible exception of dust storms. Southern New England are subject to impacts of disruptive and damaging ice storms, such as the devastating ice storm in 1998 that effected much of the Northeast United States, especially Maine, New Hampshire and Vermont, and Southeast Canada. The area is also subject to the effects of tropical disturbances, although the last hurricane to make landfall in New England was Hurricane Bob in 1991. The infrequency of hurricanes can be misleading fore in 1954 two major hurricanes, Carol and Edna impacted the area and in 1938 an unnamed hurricane (prior to the process of naming storms) devastated Rhode Island and Southern Massachusetts. All three of these storms killed numerous civilians. Southern New England is also no stranger to tornado activity, in Worcester County alone 35 tornados

have been documented since 1953, the year of the Great Worcester Tornado. Throughout the State of Massachusetts, more than 157 tornados have been reported and confirmed since 1950. Nantucket is the only county in the state to have no documented tornados. The area is regularly effected by blizzards and extra-tropical storms (commonly know as Nor'easters) such as the Blizzard of 1978 and the so called "Perfect Storm" of 1991. Other weather to affect the area includes severe thunderstorms, micro and macrobursts, extreme temperature emergencies, droughts and wildfire conditions. It is fact that there have been little among weather extremes that have not been experienced by Southern New England.

Purpose:

The purpose of the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) is to provide guidance to the Town of Southborough in preparing for, responding to and recovering from the effects of hazardous weather conditions. The SOP has been developed to help insure that there is a consistent and effective response to meteorological challenges to the citizens and employees of Southborough. It sets forth procedures to be followed in the event of a weather related emergency no matter what personnel may be on duty at the time, insuring a consistent agency level approach to any severe weather incident.

A Standard Operating Procedure is a set of instructions having the force of a directive, covering those features of operations that lend themselves to a definite or standardized procedure without loss of effectiveness. Standard operating procedures are written documents that describe, in detail, the routine procedures to be followed for a specific operation, analysis or action. Consistent use of an approved standing operating procedure ensures conformance with organizational practices, reduced work effort, reduction in error occurrences, credibility and defensibility. Standard operating procedures also serve as a resource for training and for ready reference and documentation of proper and required procedures.

As is the case with all proactive efforts, this SOP will provide the bases for actions deemed necessary to be taken in the face of an impending severe weather event. Also to this end, the National Weather Service urges residents of Southborough to keep themselves abreast to all hazardous weather conditions with the potential to impact their community and to be personally prepared to take actions to ensure their life safety and property. An informed and prepared population is one of the greatest assets a community can have in times of disasters.

The purpose of the Southborough StormReady SOP is to ensure that the Towns' personnel, equipment and resources are ready in the event of any weather related that could affect the town. This document sets forth the who and the what to alert when severe weather threatens Southborough and the predestinated responsibilities and tasks of various departments within town during such times.