

## News for Immediate Release

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### **2022 StormReady Certificate Renewed**

Des Moines County Emergency Management Agency is pleased to announce that the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) StormReady Certification for Des Moines County has been renewed through 2026. This is due primarily to the efforts of the dedicated volunteers who are members of the Des Moines County SKYWARN team.

Andy Ervin, Chairperson of the Tri-State Storm Ready Advisory Board stated that “In particular the Des Moines County SKYWARN group has become a cornerstone of the Community-NWS (National Weather Service) partnership during severe weather and is one of the top programs of its kind in the region”.

Ervin also noted that “Achieving and maintaining StormReady recognition is a significant accomplishment and demonstrates a long-term commitment to preparing for all kinds of severe weather and saving lives, both locally and as part of the complete warning process. Des Moines County’s numerous improvements since the original recognition demonstrates exceptional commitment to the safety of our residents, visitors, and neighbors of Des Moines County”.

The Des Moines County program is one of 53 counties in the state of Iowa who has earned this certification. Gina Hardin, Des Moines County Emergency Management Agency Coordinator noted, “We could not maintain this certification, which we have held since 2006, without our devoted SKYWARN volunteers. These individuals give selflessly of their time and resources to help provide local weather information to the Quad Cities NWS office, local officials, and the general public. This information, in turn, is used by the NWS to provide advance warning to others.

The Des Moines County SKYWARN team is always looking for new volunteers. The first step is to attend a weather spotter training which will be held in March 2023 in Burlington. For more information on joining our team, visit [https://www.desmoinescounty.iowa.gov/emergency\\_management/skywarn/](https://www.desmoinescounty.iowa.gov/emergency_management/skywarn/).

We live in one of the most severe weather-prone countries on the planet, according to the national StormReady website. Around 98% of all Presidential declared disasters are weather related, leading to around 500 deaths per year and nearly \$15 billion in damages. The StormReady program helps arm communities with the communication and safety skills needed to save lives and property—before, during and after the event.

StormReady helps our community leaders and emergency managers strengthen local safety programs.

The StormReady program also acknowledges organizations, businesses, facilities, or local government entities engaged in weather safety and preparedness as StormReady Supporters. For questions or more information on the StormReady or SKYWARN programs, please contact Gina Hardin at 319-753-8206 or by email at [harding@dmcounty.com](mailto:harding@dmcounty.com) or find us on Facebook.

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