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Director of Emergency Management  
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Hopkinton, RI 02833



**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**  
**National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**

NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE  
FORECAST OFFICE  
445 Myles Standish Boulevard  
Taunton, MA 02780

Dear Ron,

December 18, 2015

Congratulations! This letter serves as official notification that the town of Hopkinton has been recognized as a **StormReady** community...and joins an elite group of well-prepared communities that have achieved this. This designation indicates that Hopkinton has done everything possible to improve emergency responder and citizen preparedness in the event of a natural disaster. You have done a fine job and have every reason to be proud.

*StormReady* is a National Weather Service program that addresses the need for a higher level of community awareness in order to minimize the loss of life and property from extreme weather. Southern New England is no stranger to weather disasters. A deadly tornado struck Springfield/Monson, MA in 2011 – it was the worst since the Worcester Tornado in 1953. Hurricanes Carol and Edna both pounded the area in 1954. Tropical Storm Diane in 1955 caused major flash flooding. And let's not forget the Blizzard of 1978 and the "Perfect Storm" on Halloween, 1991...or the 100+ inches of snow earlier this year! No community can ever be 'storm proof' but Hopkinton is now 'StormReady.'

*StormReady* encourages communities to take a new, proactive approach to improving local hazardous weather operations and public awareness. *StormReady* arms communities with improved communication and safety skills needed to save lives and property – before and during an event. After the application process, the *StormReady* Advisory Board, consisting of the NWS and other local, state, and federal officials, recommends recognition. A *StormReady* designation is good for three (3) years, after which the town must apply for renewal.

In order to become *StormReady*, Hopkinton met or exceeded established criteria in six (6) areas: 1) Communications, 2) NWS Information Reception, 3) Weather & Water Monitoring Systems, 4) Local Warning Dissemination, including NOAA Weather Radios in local city or government-owned buildings with public access, 5) Community Preparedness - Safety/Spotter Talks and public education via media, and 6) Administrative Tools/Record Keeping.

More specifically... Hopkinton has a 24-hour Warning Point and an Emergency Operations Center (EOC) located at the Police Department on Woodville Road. Effective and rapid communications are the key to successful warning reception and distribution. Hopkinton has multiple ways to receive warning information. Some direct ways of receiving warnings include receiving alerts on EMA cell phones via the Interactive National Weather Service (or iNWS); NWSChat software for emergency managers; heads-up powerpoints directly from NWS-Taunton, and a NOAA Weather Radio receiver located at the EOC. In addition, NOAA Weather Radio receivers with warning alarm tones also were placed at the Town Hall, the Recreation Department, the Ashaway and Hope Valley Fire Departments, Ashaway and Hope Valley Elementary Schools, and the Yawgoog Boy Scout Camp! Alerts also are received via the Rhode Island Law Enforcement Telecommunications System (RILETS). A private company – Weatherbug – alerts for warnings and its information is displayed automatically on the Town of Hopkinton website. Local TV station monitoring is yet another source for warnings. During a disaster, when the EOC is activated, amateur radio is also monitored.

Once a warning is received, the Hopkinton Emergency Management Agency has procedures in place to disseminate the warnings. The town uses the Code Red system as the primary means to notify both responders and residents of emergencies. There is the ability to communicate with adjacent communities via EMSTARS at the EOC. There is a plan in place whereby the Police Department may provide emergency notification of severe thunderstorm and tornado warnings to several campgrounds, fields, and a RV resort. The word also gets out via Hopkinton's Facebook and Twitter social media sites.

Hopkinton has a good weather monitoring system in place, in addition to the multiple ways of receiving warnings. The National Weather Service radar loop is monitored at the Warning Point and EOC. There is a weather station located at the Police Department, complete with an anemometer and a dedicated display of the readings. There is a United States Geological Survey River Gauge located on the Wood River at Hope Valley and its readings are closely monitored. Portable hand-held lightning detectors have been purchased and are available to departments with outdoor activities, such as the Recreation Department. Lightning safety is of utmost importance!

Hopkinton has written Standard Operating Procedures for hazardous weather, which define actions to be taken by dispatchers and EMA personnel for severe weather watches and warnings, including reporting any damage directly to the National Weather Service. In the past year, you have staffed a booth at the Ashaway School Flu Clinic to hand out hurricane safety information and frequently disseminate preparedness information via Facebook and Twitter. When the Fire Department visits schools, it's a great opportunity to bring a Weather Radio along, discuss lightning safety, and make it an all-hazards presentation.

Once again, many thanks for being so proactive where weather is concerned... and congratulations on a job extremely well done!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Glenn Field".

Glenn Field,  
Warning Coordination Meteorologist  
National Weather Service – Taunton, MA

