



City of Palo Alto

City Council Staff Report

(ID # 6473)

Report Type: Special Orders of the Day Meeting Date: 1/11/2016

Summary Title: Palo Alto Certified as StormReady Community

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From: City Manager

Lead Department: Office of Emergency Services

Background

The National Weather Service (NWS) has developed a certification program known as StormReady to guide other governmental agencies in becoming better prepared to deal with storm emergencies. The City of Palo Alto's Office of Emergency Services (OES) in cooperation with the Public Works Department recently achieved all of the program requirements.

Discussion

As described by the NWS, StormReady is a nationwide community preparedness program that uses a grassroots approach to help communities develop plans to handle all types of severe weather—from tornadoes to tsunamis. The program encourages communities to take a new, proactive approach to improving local hazardous weather operations by providing emergency managers with clear-cut guidelines on how to improve their hazardous weather operations.

To be officially StormReady, a community must:

- Establish a 24-hour warning point and emergency operations center
- Have more than one way to receive severe weather warnings and forecasts and to alert the public
- Create a system that monitors weather conditions locally
- Promote the importance of public readiness through community seminars
- Develop a formal hazardous weather plan, which includes training severe weather spotters and holding emergency exercises.

A representative of the National Weather Service will present the StormReady Community certificate. Palo Alto is the only municipality in Santa Clara County to have achieved this rating. The Santa Clara Valley Water District is the only special district in this county to have also done so.