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# Sherman to become 'StormReady Community'

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SHERMAN — Last week's flash flood in Springfield shows how quickly weather can turn people's lives upside down.

So Sherman officials say there's no better time for the village to focus on its emergency preparedness.

## On the Net

For more information about the StormReady Community program, visit [www.stormready.noaa.gov](http://www.stormready.noaa.gov).

During Tuesday's meeting of the Sherman Village Board, officials from the National Weather Service Central Illinois Forecast Office in

Lincoln will designate Sherman a "StormReady Community."

Sherman will be the first community in Sangamon County to receive the designation. It will join only 44 others so designated in the state, including Taylorville, Pana, Jacksonville and Peoria.

White Oaks Mall and White Oaks Plaza in Springfield were declared a StormReady commercial site last fall.

"We've done a lot of work to try to prepare the government portion of the community to be able to react and warn the public," Sherman emergency management coordinator Mike Moos said. "We try to show that the village is progressive at trying to be as safe a community as possible."

Sherman's location just north of the capital city makes the program a good fit, he said.

"We're by the interstate and a major roadway into the capital city, so that is a risk from a transportation and hazardous-material situation. There's the rail that goes right through the middle of town ... and just west of town is a large gas pipeline. And we're in the flight path to (Abraham Lincoln) Capital Airport," he said.

"All those are things we look at that could involve us, whether natural or manmade."

The village submitted a written application to be part of the StormReady program last winter.

According to the National Weather Service, a StormReady community must create a 24-hour warning point and emergency operations center, have multiple ways to receive severe weather warnings and forecasts and to alert the public, create a system that monitors weather conditions locally, promote public readiness through community seminars and develop a formal hazardous-weather plan, which includes training weather spotters and holding emergency exercises.

Moos said the Sherman Emergency Management Agency has its emergency operations center in the police department office at the village hall, where the siren activation system and emergency power supply also are.

The village also updated its disaster-response plan. Police, fire officials and village staff members can chat via the Web in real time with National Weather Service staff and authorities in other communities whenever bad weather moves through the area.

Moos and Village President Trevor Clatfelter say Sherman also has material to help residents protect themselves.

"There's a responsibility for citizens to monitor alerts and take precautions as to safety kits and other preparations," Clatfelter said.

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