

Administration

1769 E. Moody Blvd Bldg 2
Bunnell, FL 32110



www.flaglercounty.org

Phone: (386)313-4001

Fax: (386)313-4101

Julie Murphy
Flagler County
Public Information Officer
(386) 313-4039
Email jmurphy@flaglercounty.org

Pictured left to right: Flagler Beach Fire Chief Bobby Pace, Flagler County Emergency Management Chief Jonathan Lord, National Weather Service Meteorologist Ben Nelson, and Palm Coast Fire Chief Jerry Forte

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Flagler County renews 'StormReady' certification

December 20, 2018 – Flagler County continues its tradition of maintaining its “StormReady” status – something it has had since December 1999 when it became the first county in the state of Florida to carry the designation.

The City of Palm Coast also renewed its StormReady certification, while the City of Flagler Beach earned it for the first time.

“I don’t believe there is a better prepared county than Flagler County,” said National Weather Service Meteorologist Ben Nelson Tuesday during a brief presentation ceremony. “We’d be set if every county had a (Bob Pickering).”

Pickering, who is Flagler County’s emergency management technician, regularly works with the National Weather Service to arrange Skywarn Storm Spotter classes and ensures other criterion is met, such demonstrating that procedures are in place to get weather information to and from the National Weather Service and that warning systems are in place.

These latest certification/recertifications are good until December 2021.

The program started in Oklahoma in 1998 as the “StormWise” program but the name changed in 1999, and the National Weather Service included in its strategic plan for 2000 the goal of recognizing 20 StormReady communities in the nation.

“We were already doing the things required to become StormReady when the program came out, which made it easy for us,” Pickering said.

Charles Ericksen, Jr.
District 1

Greg Hansen
District 2

David Sullivan
District 3

Joe Mullins
District 4

Donald O’Brien, Jr.
District 5

While no county or municipality is storm proof, those that are StormReady have gone to extensive measures to receive and disseminate weather information and are ready to mitigate the loss of life and property, Nelson said. Since becoming StormReady, Flagler County has trained more than 1,000 people as Skywarn Storm Spotters, many of whom are part of local volunteer organizations that used amateur radio and social media to relay severe weather reports.

The application to become StormReady is thorough and involves a site inspection with visit with someone from the National Weather Service, like Nelson, an emergency manager from a neighboring county, and a representative from the Florida Department of Emergency Management.

“We strongly encourage residents to sign up for emergency notifications through AlertFlagler,” said Emergency Management Chief Jonathan Lord. “You can chose how many and how robust you want the notifications to be, but we minimally recommend signing up for those that involve life safety – like tornadoes and hurricanes.”

Go to www.flaglercounty.org/alertflagler to register for notifications, or call 386-313-4200 or email eoc@flaglercounty.org

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