



HARRISONBURG | VA
FRIENDLY BY NATURE



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Harrisonburg named StormReady Community by National Weather Service

Sign up for weather alerts through Harrisonburg-Rockingham Emergency Alerts to stay safe

HARRISONBURG, Va. – The City of Harrisonburg, led by the organization’s Office of Emergency Management, has taken another step forward in protecting The Friendly City from weather-related emergencies. And there’s a way community members can help make themselves and Harrisonburg even safer.

The National Weather Service (NWS) recently recognized Harrisonburg as a StormReady Community. The program, according to the NWS website, 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.

“Even though Harrisonburg is not known for unpredictable weather, it’s vital that community members stay prepared for the potential of severe weather in our community year-round because we have had very serious and impactful events occur here,” Harrisonburg Deputy Emergency Coordinator Paul Helmuth said. “Being mindful of weather conditions before going out, monitoring dependable sources of local news and signing up for emergency alerts for you and your family members are all easy but important steps people can take to stay StormReady.”

To become a StormReady Community, organizations 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.

In Harrisonburg, community members can now sign up for important warnings through the Harrisonburg-Rockingham Emergency Alerts tool at <https://harrisonburgva.gov/eas> and receive a text, phone call, email and/or push notification when emergency notifications and weather alerts are issued near them. Once making an account and entering their addresses (users can add multiple addresses for home, work and other important locations for their family), community members can select what weather alerts they would like to receive in addition to law enforcement and emergency alerts, and how they would like to receive those notifications.

Harrisonburg’s Office of Emergency Management continuously looks for ways to improve safety, health and wellness in the community, including working with Harrisonburg Parks & Rec on lightning detection systems at some City parks and during special events, and with Harrisonburg Public Works on stream water level monitoring systems.



“The Office of Emergency Management is always focused on potential risks to our community,” Harrisonburg Fire Department Chief Matthew Tobia said. “I would like to recognize Deputy Emergency Coordinator Paul Helmuth for his unparalleled commitment to preparedness and resiliency.”

Find more information on Emergency Management in Harrisonburg at <https://harrisonburgva.gov/Emergency-Management>.
Find more information on the NWS StormReady program at <https://www.weather.gov/stormready/>.

***The City of Harrisonburg** is centrally located in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia. It is home to approximately 56,879 people. More information about the City of Harrisonburg is online at www.HarrisonburgVA.gov.*

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