

National Weather Service Kansas City/Pleasant Hill, Missouri

MEDIA ADVISORY 06-001

Contact: Michael J. Hudson
816-540-6125

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FROM TORNADOES TO FLOODS, PARK UNIVERSITY IS STORMREADY

Editor's Note: The program's name is StormReady (one word, no spacing between)

Students and faculty at Park University's Parkville, Missouri campus will benefit from local, state, and federal agencies working together to better prepare their communities to handle future weather-related events or disasters. Mr. Gary Foltz, acting Regional Director for NOAA's National Weather Service Central Region, will designate the Parkville campus of Park University as StormReady during a special ceremony at the McCoy Meetin' House on February 9, 2006, at 11:00 a.m. This ceremony will be attended by local University officials. Mr. Michael J. Hudson, Warning Coordination Meteorologist for the Kansas City Weather Forecast Office located in Pleasant Hill, Missouri, will also be in attendance.

Mr. Foltz will present a recognition letter and special StormReady road signs to Dr. Beverley Byers-Pevitts, President of Park University. These signs will be placed at entrances to the campus.

"Park University is the first college campus in the state of Missouri to be designated StormReady, and is only one of 11 college campuses nationwide to earn this prestigious designation," said Foltz. "Because potentially deadly severe weather can impact every American, the National Weather Service developed StormReady, a program to help guard against the ravages of Mother Nature."

StormReady is a national program that gives communities the skills and education needed to survive severe weather, before and during the event. The nationwide community preparedness program uses a grassroots and pro-active approach to help communities develop plans to improve local hazardous weather operations and public awareness for local severe weather threats.

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"Park University was designated as StormReady in November by a local StormReady Advisory Board," said Hudson. This local board was made up of representatives from the National Weather Service, the Missouri State Emergency Management Agency, and representatives from the state's emergency management community. Hudson also noted that, "The StormReady program is voluntary, and provides communities with clear-cut advice to prepare for severe weather, including developing a partnership with the local National Weather Service office, state and local emergency managers, and the media. Park University has a level of severe weather readiness that is a model for other college campuses."

Foltz said, "It's paramount for communities to understand the types of weather-related threats in the area, when they are most likely to occur, and prepare in advance for severe weather events. The recent tornado outbreak of May 4, 2003, serves as notice, that Park University's campus is prone to violent, life-threatening severe weather. Through programs such as StormReady, the National Weather Service will continue to help citizens understand the dangers these weather events present. Education is a very big part of the StormReady program."

Park University is the twenty-fourth jurisdiction designated as StormReady by the Pleasant Hill office, and the thirteenth StormReady jurisdiction in the greater Kansas City metropolitan area. There are a total of 42 StormReady designations in Missouri. Other nearby locations designated as StormReady in the Kansas City metropolitan area include Leavenworth, Wyandotte, Johnson, Clay and Platte Counties, the cities of Riverside, Lee's Summit, Belton, Gladstone, Raymore and Peculiar in Missouri, and the National Nuclear Safety Administration's Kansas City Plant. There are currently 1,026 StormReady designations nationwide.

Information about StormReady is available online at: <http://www.stormready.noaa.gov>

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