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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**NOAA's National Weather Service Declares  
Soda Springs School District a StormReady® Supporter**

Officials from NOAA's National Weather Service will recognize Soda Springs School District #150 in Soda Springs, Idaho as a StormReady® Supporter. StormReady® is a program designed by NOAA's National Weather Service to establish severe weather safety plans, enhance communication and actively promote weather awareness. Soda Springs School District is the second school district in Idaho to receive StormReady® Supporter recognition.

"Across eastern Idaho, our natural environment and diverse terrain come coupled with severe weather risks—especially from blizzards, flooding and damaging winds from severe thunderstorms. These risks require constant communication with community officials and first responders year round," said Dean Hazen, meteorologist-in-charge of the National Weather Service forecast office in Pocatello. "The StormReady® process arms us with improved communication and safety skills needed to save lives and property – before and during a weather event."

The nationwide community preparedness program uses a grassroots approach to help communities develop plans to handle local severe weather and flooding threats. The program is voluntary and provides communities with clear-cut advice from a partnership between local National Weather Service forecast offices and state and local emergency managers. StormReady® started in 1999 with seven communities in the Tulsa, Oklahoma area. There are now more than 2,450 StormReady® communities across the country.

To earn the StormReady Supporter designation, the district completed several steps to strengthen communication channels between their emergency operations staff, bus drivers, and the National Weather Service. They implemented weather safety measures for their staff, and developed coordination plans to ensure public safety within their facilities.

"The StormReady program is a great approach for us to develop plans to handle severe weather," said Dr. Molly Stein, Soda Springs School District Superintendent. "Through the StormReady program, our school district developed a robust partnership with the National Weather Service and, most importantly, improved the safety of the students and our employees"

Today Dean Hazen, meteorologist-in-charge of the National Weather Service forecast office in Pocatello, presented a recognition plaque and a special StormReady sign to Dr. Stein and her staff during a ceremony at the Soda Springs High School.

Every year, about 500 Americans lose their lives to severe weather and floods. More than 10,000 severe thunderstorms, 2,500 floods and 1,000 tornadoes impact the United States annually, and hurricanes are a threat to the Gulf and East coasts. NOAA's National Weather Service developed the StormReady® program to help local communities prepare for dangerous weather.

Disaster preparedness is everyone's responsibility. Educating yourself and your family on environmental hazards, maintaining a disaster supply kit and having an emergency plan in place, are all ways you can be better prepared.

StormReady® Supporter is a component of the nationwide StormReady® preparedness program that helps communities develop severe weather and flooding response plans with NOAA's

National Weather Service and local emergency managers.

The StormReady® program is part of NOAA National Weather Service's working partnership with the International Association of Emergency Managers and the National Emergency Management Association.

NOAA's National Weather Service is the primary source of weather data, forecasts and warnings for the United States and its territories. NOAA's National Weather Service operates the most advanced weather and flood warning and forecast system in the world, helping to protect lives and property and enhance the national economy.

On the Web:

NOAA: [www.noaa.gov](http://www.noaa.gov)

NOAA's National Weather Service: [www.weather.gov](http://www.weather.gov)

NWS Pocatello: [www.weather.gov/pocatello](http://www.weather.gov/pocatello)

StormReady® program: [www.stormready.noaa.gov](http://www.stormready.noaa.gov)

Weather Ready Nation: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/com/weatherreadynation/>

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