

StormReady Reaccreditation

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A-State Recognized as 'StormReady' Campus by National Weather Service

08/18/2025

JONESBORO – Just as students prepare to arrive at Arkansas State University for the start of the fall semester, the Office of Emergency Management is announcing its redesignation as a StormReady campus community.

“The National Weather Service (NWS) in Memphis recognized our capabilities as being among the best in the program,” said Wyatt Reed, emergency management and occupational health specialist.

“It shows that A-State is better prepared when severe weather impacts Northeast Arkansas and has accomplished this recognition through advanced planning, education and awareness,” said Todd Beal, warning coordination meteorologist at the NWS in Memphis.

Reed said the university works to prepare campus staff, provide situational awareness, and decision-making support through weather briefings. Through these actions, they can accurately respond to severe weather hazards.

“A-State is one of 290 StormReady universities in the country. There are approximately 5,300 universities and colleges in the United States, meaning only roughly 5.5% hold this designation,” said Reed.

To receive this specialized placement, A-State must meet several requirements. These include having an established hazardous weather plan with different response actions and thresholds for severe weather.

That plan has to be shared with and available to staff, faculty and students so they are fully prepared and ready for possible threats. This designation will expire in August of 2029.

Students can sign up for emergency alerts through Pack Portal. The alerts are specific to the A-State campus. Students can add up to three phone numbers that can receive alerts.

“Another part of the designation requirements is assuring adequate methods are in place for receiving and relaying hazardous weather messages from the National Weather Service,” added Beal.

“It requires that we host multiple awareness events across our campus community to raise awareness of the hazards we face and the responses we can take individually and as a community to prepare, respond, and recover. We must demonstrate that we have a robust emergency notification system in place to warn our community in an accurate and timely manner,” Reed continued.

A meteorologist from the NWS reviews the procedures on campus and conducts a site visit to assess capabilities. Reed explained that this four-year certification shows the ever-renewing effort that A-State has to keep the campus community in a constant state of preparedness.

“Our office maintains a close working relationship with local broadcast meteorology as well as the NWS in both Memphis and Little Rock,” Reed added.

A-State partners with local, state and internal agencies to review severe weather plans and ensure that lines of communication are open.

“Severe weather usually includes rapidly evolving dynamics and timing. However, our office monitors trends from NWS and other data sources. While this is ongoing, we disseminate this information in briefings to campus leadership and key departments for their awareness,” said Reed.

A-State sends out monthly tests of the Emergency Alert System used on campus to communicate with students, faculty and staff. In times of actual emergencies, such as severe weather, this system is used to communicate vital information.

“We maintain two storm-centric resource centers that provide real-time, up-to-date weather information and emergency actions to protect life and property,” Reed added.

The university maintains a list of severe weather resources that is always available and shared via social media ahead of severe weather outbreaks.

“Preparedness is a community-wide effort. Without the support of our staff, external agencies, campus leadership, and most importantly, our students, we would not be able to build an environment that meets the criteria of a StormReady community,” said Reed.

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