

Tucson Medical Center Recognized as 2017 Weather Ready Nation Ambassador of Excellence

NOAA and the National Weather Service has developed a Weather Ready Nation (WRN) Ambassador program to help improve the nation's readiness, responsiveness, and overall resilience against extreme weather, water, and climate events. WRN Ambassador's commit to working with NOAA, the NWS and other Ambassadors to strengthen national resilience against extreme weather. WRN Ambassador's span across government, non-profits, academia, and private industry with the goal of making the nation more ready, responsive, and resilient against extreme environmental hazards.

NWS Tucson nominated Tucson Medical Center (TMC) for its work hosting its annual Be Safe Saturday event, which has provided a venue for dozens of organizations to help educate the public about how to stay safe for the past 13 years. The National Weather Service has participated in many of TMC's Be Safe Saturday events where it has been able to speak about weather safety to hundreds of families.

TMC Safety Manager Steven Barnes said TMC monitors weather conditions to ensure the safety of its HazMat team when wearing gear in the heat of the summer. The TMC Safety Department presents heat stress prevention classes to facilities personnel each June, followed by lightning safety in July. TMC is prepared for electrical outages during the monsoon storms with very extensive backup generator equipment for patient safety, Barnes noted, adding the hospital also has a fully equipped disaster command center and participates in local and statewide exercises every year.

"As you can imagine we are very dependent on accurate weather forecasts and prepare on a regular basis for all weather threats and situations," Barnes said, adding he was pleased with the recognition.

NWS Tucson now has over 30 local Weather Ready Nation Ambassadors across Southeast Arizona. The Ambassador initiative recognizes leaders in the community that help build community resilience in the face of extreme weather events – from promoting safety messages in outreach activities, to being a "weather-ready" role model. While not for individuals, any organization can become a Weather Ready Nation Ambassador. Schools, government agencies, private businesses, civic organizations, home owner associations and others can apply online at <https://www.weather.gov/wrn/amb-tou> If you have questions about the WRN Ambassador program, or the online application, please contact Ken Drozd at Kenneth.drozd@noaa.gov



Warning Coordination Meteorologist Ken Drozd (left) presenting Tucson Medical Center Safety Manager Steven Barnes (right) the 2017 Weather Ready Nation Ambassador of Excellence recognition.