

Talking Points



NATIONAL SEVERE WEATHER PREPAREDNESS WEEK

March 2-8, 2014

#BeAForce

Be a Force of Nature: Take the Next Step

NOAA's National Weather Service and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) are teaming up for a third year to lead a public education effort aimed at improving the way people prepare for and respond to severe weather.

National Severe Weather Preparedness Week is March 2-8, 2014. The goal of National Severe Weather Preparedness Week is to inform the public about severe weather hazards and provide knowledge which can be used to prepare and take action. These actions can be used to save lives anywhere - at home, in schools, and in the workplace before tornadoes and severe thunderstorms and extreme weather strikes.

Know your risk:

Every state in the United States experiences tornadoes and severe weather - A total of 267 tornadoes occurred across 25 states during May 2013, including the devastating EF5 tornado that struck Moore, Oklahoma, on the 20th causing an estimated \$2 billion in property damage. Acting quickly could mean the difference between life and death in these situations. Follow weather.gov to get the latest forecasts.

- Severe weather could happen at any time, anywhere. That rang true on November 17, 2013 when a late season tornado outbreak became the most active day of the year in 2013, in terms of the number of tornadoes. In November 2013, at least 70 tornadoes spanned seven states in the Midwest, notably Illinois. Two of the tornadoes were preliminary EF4 rating (winds over 165 mph).
- Being prepared and acting quickly could be a matter of survival. This is critical during the threat of severe weather. In May 2013, tornadoes devastated portions of Oklahoma. This outbreak included the deadliest tornado of the year on May 20 in Moore, Oklahoma where an EF5 tornado struck (winds in excess of 200 mph). The Moore tornado is estimated to have caused approximately \$2 billion in property damage.
- Severe weather knows no boundaries and affects every individual, so we're calling on people across the country to ***Be a Force of Nature*** in their communities and prepare.

- Be Alert! Listen to the weather forecast on radio or television. Check weather.gov. Obtain a [NOAA Weather Radio](#) for weather updates and check for [Wireless Emergency Alerts](#) (WEA) on your cell phone.
- Severe weather comes in many forms and your emergency plan should include all types of local hazards.

Take action:

During National Severe Weather Preparedness Week, join National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and do your part to prepare now. Being prepared is a collective effort. It takes the whole community to effectively prepare for, protect against, respond to, recover from, and mitigate against damages caused by tornadoes and severe thunderstorms.

- Before storms strike, ***Be a Force of Nature*** and take the first step to making sure that you and your family are prepared for severe weather. These include developing a [family communications plan](#), putting an [emergency kit](#) together, keeping important papers and valuables in a safe place, and getting involved to make your community safe.
- Sign up for America's PrepareAthon April 30, take action and share the word to encourage others to participate. www.ready.gov/prepare #prepareAthon

Be an example:

- Building a [Weather-Ready Nation](#) requires the action of all of us. Each and every person across the country has the potential to ***Be a Force of Nature*** when it comes to weather-readiness. Studies show that individuals need to receive messages a number of ways before taking appropriate action.
- Many are more likely to act when the messages are received from a trusted source-family, friends, or a community leader.
- And, history teaches that a lack of awareness and preparation are common threads among all major weather threats. Knowing your vulnerability and what actions you should take could save your life and others.
- During this preparedness week we ask you to Be a Force of Nature – Know your risk, take action and be an example, by sharing what you have done, with your friends, family, coworkers, and others.
- Once you have taken action, share your story with your family and friends by creating a video and posting it to YouTube or another video sharing site or post your story on Facebook, LinkedIn, [Twitter](#) or any other social media site you're on.

Need ideas for what you can do?

- Ensure you and your family knows your surroundings and risk for specific weather events.
- Have an emergency plan, and know what to do before severe weather strikes. Post your plan in your home where family and friends who visit can see it.

- Identify an appropriate shelter in your home, neighborhood and community ahead of time. Share this with your neighbor.
- Learn how to strengthen your home and business against severe weather. Pass this on at a community gathering or faith-based meeting.
- Find out from local government emergency management how you will be notified for each kind of disaster and sign up for additional alerts through social media and local news. Understand these local warning systems and signals and share your knowledge with your coworkers and friends. Email these resources to your friends, post to your social media account.
- Remember, once you have taken action; share your story with your family and friends.
- Text your love ones and let them know you are safe and where you are.

Learn more at www.weather.gov and www.ready.gov/severe-weather or the Spanish-language web site www.listo.gov. Follow the National Weather Service [@nws](https://twitter.com/nws) and FEMA [@readygov](https://twitter.com/readygov).