



Talking Points

NATIONAL SEVERE WEATHER PREPAREDNESS WEEK

Key message:

Be a Force of Nature: Severe Weather Affects Everyone, Know Your Risk, Take Action, Be an Example

- National Severe Weather Preparedness Week is March 3-9, 2013.
- During National Severe Weather Preparedness Week, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the National Oceanic and Atmosphere Administration (NOAA) emphasize the need for individuals, families, businesses, and nonprofits to prepare emergency plans, and to know what to do before severe weather strikes. More information on tornadoes and severe thunderstorms is available at www.weather.gov and ready.gov/severe-weather.
- The goals of National Severe Weather Preparedness Week are to:
 - Inform the public about the severe weather hazards in their locality;
 - Provide information that can be used to prepare individuals and communities for severe weather events; and
 - Motivate individuals and communities to take actions that will prepare them in the event of a severe weather disaster and to share their preparedness steps with others. These actions can save lives anywhere - at home, in schools, and in the workplace before tornadoes, thunderstorms, and other severe weather strikes.
- **[Organization]**, FEMA and NOAA are just one part of the emergency management team that works to prepare and respond to disaster. A key member of the team is the public. That is why we are encouraging everyone to do their part and prepare now, so that you know what to do when severe weather strikes.

Know your risk:

- Each year, many people are killed or seriously injured by tornadoes and other types of severe weather, despite advance warning. In 2012, there were more than 450 weather-related fatalities and nearly 2,600 injuries.
- There were 936 tornadoes reported in 2012, with 206 in April alone. Property and crop damage from tornadoes in 2012 is estimated at \$1.6 billion. See more at www.spc.noaa.gov/wcm/2012/2012-NOAA-NWS-tornado-facts.pdf.
- Every state in the United States has experienced tornadoes and severe weather - 46 states reported tornadoes in 2012 - so everyone is exposed to some degree of risk.
- Because severe weather knows no boundaries and affects every individual we're calling on people across the country to *be a force of nature* in their communities to prepare for severe weather.

Take action:

- **[Organization]**, FEMA and NOAA are just one part of the emergency management team that works to prepare and respond to disaster. A key member of the team is the public. That is why we are encouraging everyone to do their part and prepare now, so that you know what to do when severe weather strikes.
- This year, we ask families, communities and businesses *to be force of nature* by taking the pledge to prepare at ready.gov/severe-weather.
- When you pledge to prepare, you will take the first steps to making sure that you and your family are prepared for severe weather. These steps include developing a family communications plan, putting an emergency kit together, keeping important papers and valuables in a safe place, and getting involved in your community to encourage preparedness. Visit ready.gov/severe-weather for more on family preparedness for severe weather.
- Stay informed by having multiple sources for weather alerts - [NOAA Weather Radio](#), an adaptive weather radios for individuals with access and functional needs, [NWS Weather Wire Service](#), [Weather.gov](#), and [Wireless Emergency Alerts](#). Subscribe to receive alerts at www.weather.gov/subscribe.

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. By sharing your preparedness actions with your community you are *being a force of nature*.

- 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 can 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. You can create a video and post it to YouTube or another video sharing site, or post your story on Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, or through other social media sites.

What you can do

- Ensure that you and your family members know about your surroundings and risk for specific weather. Stay informed by having multiple sources for weather alerts.
- Have an emergency plan in place, and know what to do before severe weather strikes. Exercise the plan with your family and post it in your home where visitors can see it.
- As part of tailoring your plans, consider working with others to create networks of neighbors, relatives, friends and co-workers who will assist each other in an emergency. Discuss your needs and responsibilities and how people in the network can assist each other with communication, care of children, pets, specific needs like the operation of durable medical equipment or how we can inform someone with a hearing loss about impending severe weather .
- 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, local service organizations 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, friends. Email these resources to your friends, post to your social media account.
- Often the real "first responders" to an emergency don't have flashing lights and sirens. They are moms and dads, store managers, and teachers. What they do before, during, and after an emergency can save lives.
- Once you have taken action share your story with your family and friends. Create a YouTube video and post your story through a social media site.
- During National Severe Weather Preparedness Week, we emphasize the need for individuals, families, businesses, and nonprofits to prepare emergency plans, and to know what to do before severe weather strikes. More information on tornadoes and severe thunderstorms is available at weather.gov and ready.gov/severe-weather.