



**Governor John R. Kasich**

American Red Cross  
Emergency Management Association of Ohio  
National Weather Service  
Ohio Citizen Corps  
Ohio Department of Aging  
Ohio Department of Commerce-State Fire Marshal  
Ohio Department of Education  
Ohio Department of Health

Ohio Department of Insurance  
Ohio Dept. of Mental Health & Addiction Services  
Ohio Department of Natural Resources  
Ohio Department of Public Safety - Ohio EMA  
Ohio Department of Transportation  
Ohio Insurance Institute  
Ohio Silver Jackets  
WCMH – NBC4

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**March/Spring 2018**

Though we are only in the third month of the year, 2018 has kept us on edge as we have been preparing for, and responding to, numerous hazardous weather events around Ohio. We started off with several winter storms and cold spells that prompted us to work with our communities to establish shelters and warming centers. More recently, we've seen significant flooding around the state that led the Governor to declare a State of Emergency for 17 counties. On February 25, Ohio saw its first tornado (Clermont County, EF1), continuing its trend of seeing wintertime tornadoes around the state.

Now as winter turns to spring, the Ohio Committee for Severe Weather Awareness (OCSWA) is excited to continue its mission of helping Ohioans stay prepared for the upcoming severe weather season. OCSWA is committed to provide Ohioans with severe weather safety information and guidance on what to do before, during and after weather and household emergencies.

Through the use of OCSWA's [website](#), Facebook ([www.facebook.com/ohweatherawareness](http://www.facebook.com/ohweatherawareness)), Twitter (@OHwxAwareness), and our educational meetings and events, the committee engages the public and educates them on the varieties of severe weather Ohio experiences.

A specific example of engagement is OCSWA's annual Severe Weather Awareness Poster Contest, through which we encourage Ohio students in 1<sup>st</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> grades to research the state's severe weather hazards, and develop a poster that highlights severe weather safety and preparedness. Schools have until April 16 to submit their posters. The committee will then judge and determine the regional and state-winning posters. All winners will be invited to attend an awards ceremony held at the Ohio State Fair on Saturday, August 4.

Ohio's Severe Weather Safety Week is March 18-24. This is a great opportunity for homes, schools and businesses to brush up on their knowledge of spring severe weather threats, and to test their safety plans. The Statewide Tornado Drill will take place on Wednesday, March 21<sup>st</sup> at 9:50 a.m. EAS test messages will broadcast and most counties will sound their outdoor warning sirens. Ohioans are encouraged to use this time to practice their tornado drills.

On behalf of all of us on the Ohio Committee for Severe Weather Awareness, I would like to thank you for helping us to educate and prepare the state for severe weather season.

Sincerely,

Alex McCarthy

Chair, Ohio Committee for Severe Weather Awareness  
Director, Tuscarawas County Office of Homeland Security & Emergency Management