

Governor Ted Strickland



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National Weather Service
Ohio Citizen Corps
Ohio Department of Aging
Ohio Department of Commerce-State Fire Marshal
Ohio News Network

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Ohio Department of Natural Resources
Ohio Emergency Management Agency
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**NEWS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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Artists Wanted for 2007 Severe Weather Awareness Poster Contest
Ohio's first through sixth-graders eligible to participate

(Columbus, OH) – The Ohio Committee for Severe Weather Awareness is encouraging Ohio's students in first through sixth grade and individualized instruction classes to participate in the 2007 Severe Weather Awareness Contest. The goal of this annual contest is for Ohio's students to show through illustration how to protect themselves from the natural hazards that typically affect the state. Ohio is typically affected by floods, tornadoes, thunder and lightning storms, winter storms and extreme heat.

“As parents and educators, we are committed to teach safety and preparedness to our students,” said Nancy Dragani, executive director of the Ohio Emergency Management Agency. “This contest is the perfect opportunity for students to have fun, be creative, and learn about severe weather planning and protection.”

Ohio schools have until April 16, 2007 to send their top posters per grade level to their regional National Weather Service (NWS) Office. The NWS offices will choose their top regional winners; then in May, the Ohio Committee for Severe Weather Awareness will conduct a state-level judging to determine the state and overall state winning posters. All of the initial regional winners will be invited to the Ohio State Fair in August, for an awards ceremony.

An ideal time for students to participate in this contest is during Ohio's Spring Severe Weather Awareness Week, which is March 25-31. Many schools' science and art classes concentrate on Ohio weather and emergency preparedness around this time of the year. Also, a statewide tornado drill will be conducted during this week on Wednesday, March 28. Counties will sound their warning sirens and the Emergency Alert System will broadcast a test message. The committee encourages homes, schools and businesses to practice their tornado drills during this time.

For complete rules and forms to participate in the Severe Weather Awareness Poster Contest, visit the Ohio Committee for Severe Weather Awareness Web site at www.weathersafety.ohio.gov. Go to the bottom of the menu box and click on “2007 Contest Rules.”

Ohio EMA and the National Weather Service are two of 13 state agencies and organizations that represent the Ohio Committee for Severe Weather Awareness.

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