

Governor Ted Strickland



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 News Network

Ohio Department of Education
Ohio Department of Health
Ohio Department of Insurance
Ohio Department of Natural Resources
Ohio Department of Public Safety-Ohio EMA
Ohio Insurance Institute

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Ohio's Severe Weather Awareness Week is March 22-28
Statewide Tornado Drill is Wednesday, March 25

Columbus, OH – The month of April is right around the corner. And with that, tornado season in Ohio is soon to begin. April through July are the peak months that tornadoes can occur in Ohio. It is important that everyone knows where to go and what to do if they hear the warning sirens sound.

Governor Ted Strickland has proclaimed March 22-28 as this year's Severe Weather Awareness Week. In a coordinated effort with the governor and the Ohio Committee for Severe Weather Awareness, the state will participate in a statewide tornado drill and test its Emergency Alert System on Wednesday, March 25 at 9:50 a.m. Schools, businesses and households are encouraged to practice their emergency plans and tornado drills during this time.

The best defense when faced with tornado warnings or any severe weather event is preparedness. Know the weather situation. Have a disaster plan. Practice the plan. Make a supply kit. Be prepared.

Know Tornado Terms

A **TORNADO** is a violently rotating column of air that extends from the base of a thunderstorm. A condensation funnel does not need to reach the ground for a tornado to be present. A debris cloud beneath a thunderstorm is all that is needed to confirm the presence of a tornado.

A **TORNADO WATCH** is issued by the National Weather Service when conditions are favorable for the development of tornadoes in and close to the watch area. Watches are usually issued for four to eight hours. During the tornado watch, people should review tornado safety rules and be prepared to move to a place of safety if threatening weather approaches. Listen to a NOAA Weather Radio or local TV or radio newscasts for up-to-date weather information.

A **TORNADO WARNING** is issued by the local National Weather Service when a tornado has been detected by Doppler radar or sighted by storm spotters. A tornado watch does not have to be in effect for a tornado to form. If a tornado warning is issued for your area, seek safe shelter immediately. Tornado warnings are usually issued for 30 minutes. Continue to listen to your NOAA Weather Radio or local TV or radio newscasts for up-to-date weather information.

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"Teaching Ohioans Severe Weather Safety and Preparedness"

www.weathersafety.ohio.gov

Tornado Safety Tips

Whether practicing a tornado drill or sheltering during a tornado warning, the Ohio Committee for Severe Weather Awareness encourages everyone to **DUCK**.

D – Go **DOWN** to the lowest level

U – Get **UNDER** something

C – **COVER** your head

K – **KEEP** in shelter until the storm has passed

- Be prepared for severe weather before a storm watch or warning is issued. Meet with household members to develop a disaster plan to respond to all hazards, including tornado watches and warnings. Conduct regular tornado drills. Know how to turn off the water, gas and electric at the main switches.
- If you are a person with special needs, register your name and address with your local emergency management agency, police and/or fire departments before any natural or man-made disaster occurs.
- The NOAA Weather Radio has alerting tools available for people who are hearing impaired. Some weather radio receivers can be connected to an existing home security system, similar as a doorbell, smoke detector or other sensor. For additional information, visit the NWS NOAA Weather Radio link: http://www.weather.gov/nwr/special_need.htm
- The safest place to be during a tornado is a basement. If the building has no basement or cellar, go to a small, centrally located room on the lowest level of the building, such as a bathroom or closet or interior hallway.
- If you are in a vehicle, trailer or mobile home, get out immediately and go to the lowest floor of a sturdy, nearby building or storm shelter. Mobile homes, even if tied down, offer little or no protection from tornadoes.
- If you are outside with no shelter, lie in a nearby ditch or depression and cover your head with your hands. Do not seek shelter under a highway overpass or bridge. You will be exposed to stronger winds and flying debris.

Since 1978, the Ohio Committee for Severe Weather Awareness has been dedicated in educating Ohioans about the natural disasters that typically affect the state, and how to plan and prepare for severe weather incidents and home emergencies *before* they happen. For additional information on tornado safety and severe weather preparedness, visit the OCSWA Web site at: www.weathersafety.ohio.gov.

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