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Working For You. Working With You.



EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Monday, April 04, 2016

Media

Because severe weather can threaten the lives and property of Minnesotans at any time, April 11th-15th has been proclaimed as Severe Weather Awareness Week.

It takes a whole community to prepare for, respond to and recover from tornadoes, straight line winds, floods and heat waves. It is hoped that all residents will take the time during this week to re-assess their personal emergency plans and supplies.

Wadena County will participate in both tornado drills on Thursday April 14th at 1:45 and 6:55 PM. Your communities' outdoor warning system will be activated during both tornado drills

Each day of Severe Weather Awareness Week is devoted to a specific topic to help keep Minnesota ready.

Monday - Alerts and Warnings

Today's technology is providing notification about approaching severe weather more available than ever. The HSEM website has information explaining the new Wireless Emergency Alerts that provide tornado warnings on cell phones. Here are the differences between a watch and a warning

Watch

A **watch** means weather conditions are favorable for dangerous weather to occur. In other words, a "watch" means watch out for what the weather could do, and be ready to act accordingly. You may wish to alter or have a back-up plan for any outdoor activities or travel.

Warnings

For severe thunderstorms, tornadoes and flash floods, a **warning** means the weather event is imminent or occurring somewhere in the defined warning area and that people need to take shelter as soon as possible.

Tuesday - Severe Weather, Lightning and Hail

Thunderstorms can produce straight-line winds that exceed 100 miles per hour. For this reason you should treat severe thunderstorms just as you would tornadoes. Move to an appropriate shelter if you are in the path of the storm.

Hail is product of thunderstorms that causes nearly \$1 billion in damage every year. Most hail is about pea-sized. Some of it is the size of baseballs, and it can reach grapefruit-size. Large hail stones fall faster than 100 mph and have been known to kill people.

Every thunderstorm produces lightning. Lightning kills about 100 Americans each year

Lightning Safety Tips

- NO PLACE outside is safe when thunderstorms are in the area!
- If you hear thunder, lightning is close enough to strike you.
- When you hear thunder, immediately move to safe shelter: a substantial building with electricity or plumbing or an enclosed, metal-topped vehicle with windows up.

Wednesday - Floods

Spring flooding and flash flooding combine to produce some of the most dangerous and costly disasters in Minnesota. Review this important checklist to learn how you and your family can prepare for and respond to flooding.

Thursday - Statewide tornado drill day

Review tornado plans and safety information. Make sure that you and your families know what to do during a tornado whether it is at work, home, or school.

At 1:45 p.m. - The National Weather Service will issue a simulated tornado warning for Minnesota counties. Businesses, schools and local and state agencies are encouraged to use this warning as a time to review emergency procedures.

6:55 p.m. The National Weather Service will issue a second simulated tornado warning. The second drill is issued to allow families to practice their emergency plan at home.

Friday –Extreme Heat

Heat-related illness accounted for 35 deaths in Minnesota from 2000 – 2010. The Minnesota Department of Health says residents 65 and older are most vulnerable to heat-related hospitalizations. The MDH website includes an Extreme Heat Toolkit to help communities better prepare for the hot summer months.

If you have questions about what you should do during severe weather events please feel free to contact the Wadena County Sheriff's Office Emergency Management at 218-631-7795.

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