

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

- This year, the week of April 22 will mark *the first* National Severe Weather Preparedness Week.
- The goal of National Severe Weather Preparedness Week is to inform the public about the severe weather hazards and provide knowledge which can be used to take action. These actions can be used to save lives anywhere - at home, in schools, and in the workplace before tornadoes and severe thunderstorms strike.

Know your risk:

- Each year, many people are killed or seriously injured by tornadoes and other types of severe weather, despite advance warning. In 2011, there were more than 1,000 weather-related fatalities and more than 8,000 injuries.
- Every state in the U.S. has experienced tornadoes and severe weather, 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/severeweather.
- When you pledge to prepare, you will take the first step to making sure that you and your family are prepared for severe weather. These include developing a family communications plan, putting an emergency kit together, keeping important papers and valuables in a safe place, and getting involved. Visit Ready.gov/severeweather for more on family preparedness for severe weather.

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 Community leader.
- And, 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 by creating a video and posting it to YouTube or another video sharing site, or post your story on Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, or any other social media site you're on.

Need ideas for what you can do?

- Ensure you and your family know your surroundings and risk for specific weather.
- Have an emergency plan, and know what to do before severe weather strikes. Post your plan in your home where family and friends who visit can see it.
- 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 or faith-based meeting.
- Find out from local government emergency management how you will be notified for each kind of disasters 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.
- Remember, once you have taken action share your story with your family and friends. Create a YouTube video and post your story on a social media site you're on.
- During National Severe Weather Preparedness Week, we emphasize the need for individuals, businesses, nonprofits, and families to prepare emergency plans, and to know what to do before a tornado strikes. More information on tornadoes and severe thunderstorms is available at www.weather.gov and www.ready.gov/severeweather.