



Governor John R. Kasich

American Red Cross
Emergency Management Association of Ohio
Ohio Citizen Corps
National Weather Service
Ohio Department of Aging
Ohio Department of Commerce-State Fire Marshal
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 Department of Transportation
Ohio Insurance Institute
Ohio News Network

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Ohio's students in grades 1-6 encouraged to participate in 2012 Severe Weather Awareness Poster Contest

Columbus, OH – The Ohio Committee for Severe Weather Awareness is looking for students in first through sixth grades, including specialized instruction classes, to participate in its annual poster contest. The purpose of the severe weather awareness poster contest is to have Ohio's youth demonstrate through illustrations of actions they can take before, during and after severe weather events to protect themselves and others.

Tornadoes, floods, thunder and lightning storms, extreme heat and snow and ice storms are weather conditions that typically affect the state.

“As educators and parents, we are committed to teach safety and preparedness practices to our students,” said Nancy Dragani, executive director of the Ohio Emergency Management Agency. “With tornadoes and flash flooding already impacting Ohio, this poster contest provides the perfect opportunity for students to learn about weather preparedness, be creative, and teach others about severe weather planning and protection.”

Ohio schools have until Monday, April 16 to send their first-place posters (per grade) to their regional National Weather Service offices. The NWS offices will judge all poster entries and choose their top regional winners per grade. In early May, the Severe Weather Awareness committee will judge the top regional posters to determine the state and overall state winners.

Schools will be notified of their regional winners by the end of May. All regional winners will be invited to attend the poster contest awards ceremony, which will be held at the Ohio State Fair's DiSalle's Creative Arts Center on Saturday, August 4.

The prizes are big and the day's event is fun. All regional winners and their parents will receive four entry passes for the day at the Ohio State Fair. The regional winners will receive a host of prizes, certificates and awards, all packed inside a sling bag. State-level winners will receive additional prizes, a congratulatory letter from the governor, their posters framed, plaques, rain gauges and \$50 savings bonds. The overall state winner will receive the regional and state-level prizes, plus a \$100 savings bond, additional prizes from the committee's partners, a personalized trophy, and a trophy to display at the overall winner's school.

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“Teaching Ohioans Severe Weather Safety and Preparedness”

www.weathersafety.ohio.gov

An ideal time for students to participate in the poster contest is during Ohio's Spring Severe Weather Awareness Week, which is March 25-31. Many schools' science and art classes focus on severe weather and emergency preparedness during this time of year. Also, during this safety campaign, a statewide tornado drill will be conducted on Wednesday, March 28 at 9:50 a.m. Most counties will test and sound their outdoor warning sirens and the Emergency Alert System will broadcast a test message. The Ohio Committee for Severe Weather Awareness encourages schools, businesses and homes to practice their tornado safety drills during this time.

For complete rules and forms to participate in the poster contest, visit the Ohio Committee for Severe Weather Awareness website at: www.weathersafety.ohio.gov. Go to **Just for Kids** and click on **2012 Poster Contest Rules**.

The Ohio Committee for Severe Weather Awareness is comprised of 14 organizations and state agencies that are dedicated in teaching Ohioans severe weather safety and preparedness.

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