



Governor John R. Kasich

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Emergency Management Association of Ohio	Ohio Dept. of Mental Health & Addiction Services
National Weather Service	Ohio Department of Natural Resources
Ohio Citizen Corps	Ohio Department of Public Safety - Ohio EMA
Ohio Department of Aging	Ohio Department of Transportation
Ohio Department of Commerce-State Fire Marshal	Ohio Insurance Institute
Ohio Department of Education	WBNS – 10TV
Ohio Department of Health	WCMH – NBC4

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 25, 2015

Contact: Kelli Blackwell, Ohio EMA (614) 799-3694

Melissa Menerey, Ohio Dept. of Natural Resources (614) 265-6781

Be Prepared for Any Storm during Severe Weather Awareness Week
Ohio's Statewide Tornado Drill is March 4th at 9:50 a.m.

COLUMBUS, OH – This winter, Ohio's weather has yo-yoed between arctic blasts with sub-zero temps to off-season warmth with temperatures in the 50s. Ohioans know from experience: When it comes to weather, be prepared for anything.

Governor John R. Kasich, in a coordinated effort with the Ohio Committee for Severe Weather Awareness (OCSWA), proclaims March 1-7 as Ohio's Severe Weather Awareness Week.

“Severe Weather Awareness Week is the opportune time to create or review emergency plans to be ready for any incident that can impact your home or community,” said Evan Schumann, executive director of the Ohio Emergency Management Agency. “Whether it's tornadoes, flash flooding, prolonged power outages or home fires, knowing what to do during an emergency is crucial.”

As part of Severe Weather Awareness Week, as coordinated by OCSWA, the state of Ohio will participate in a statewide tornado drill and test its Emergency Alert System (EAS) on Wednesday, March 4 at 9:50 a.m. During this time, Ohio counties will sound and test their outdoor warning sirens. Schools, businesses and households are encouraged to practice their tornado drills and emergency plans.

OCSWA encourages Ohioans to practice the following safety measures:

Know Your Risk – Learn and understand the different types of weather hazards that occur in Ohio. Know how severe weather could impact your household, your job, your community. Ohio's springtime hazards include tornadoes, thunderstorms, floods, and even snowstorms through early spring. Visit the OCSWA website at www.weathersafety.ohio.gov to view current weather in Ohio, and to learn about severe weather safety and preparedness.

During tornado drills or actual tornado warnings, remember to **DUCK!**

D – Go **DOWN** to the lowest level

U – Get **UNDER** something (like a basement staircase or heavy table or desk)

C – **COVER** your head

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

Know the Weather Terms – Know the difference between storm watches and storm warnings.

For example, a **tornado watch** is issued by the National Weather Service when conditions are favorable for the development of tornadoes in and close to the area. During a tornado watch, review tornado safety plans and be prepared to move to a safe place if conditions worsen. Listen to a NOAA Weather Radio or local TV or radio stations newscasts for storm updates.

“Teaching Ohioans Severe Weather Safety and Preparedness”

www.weathersafety.ohio.gov

A **tornado warning** is issued by the NWS when a tornado has been detected by Doppler radar or sighted by storm spotters. If a tornado warning is issued for your area, do not stop to take pictures or shoot video. Seek safe shelter immediately. Many Ohio counties have outdoor warning sirens that sound during storm warnings. Continue to listen to your NOAA Weather Radio or TV or radio newscasts for up-to-date weather information.

Another way to receive notification of severe weather and other emergencies is through your cellphone device. Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA) are emergency messages sent by authorized government alerting authorities through your mobile carrier. WEAs can alert you of extreme weather warnings, local emergencies requiring evacuation or immediate action, AMBER Alerts, and Presidential Alerts during a national emergency.

A Wireless Emergency Alert looks like a text message and includes a special alert tone and vibration. The WEA message typically shows the type and time of the alert, what action you should take, and the agency issuing the alert. Government partners that can issue WEAs include local and state public safety agencies, FEMA, the FCC, the Dept. of Homeland Security, and NWS.

Also starting in March, FEMA and the National Weather Service are initiating spring flood safety campaigns to raise awareness of the dangers associated with flooding and flash flooding. Know what to do in case of a flood watch or warning.

Flash Flood Warning: Take Action! A flash flood warning is issued by the NWS when flash flooding is imminent or occurring. If you are in a flood-prone area, move to higher ground immediately. A flash flood is a sudden violent flood that can take from minutes to hours to develop.

Flood Warning: Take Action! A flood warning is issued when the hazardous weather event is imminent or already happening. Listen to EAS messages for possible evacuation orders.

Flood Watch: Be Prepared! – A flood watch is issued when conditions are favorable for flooding to occur. A watch does not mean flooding will occur, but it's possible.

Flood Advisory: Be Aware! A flood advisory is issued when flooding is not expected to be bad enough to issue a warning. However, the weather event could cause significant inconvenience. Caution should be exercised.

During any weather event (heavy rains, tornado watches, severe thunderstorms), continue listening to local weather reports via radio, television or NOAA Weather Radio.

Additional flood safety information is available on OCSWA's page: <http://1.usa.gov/1h2CQQs>

The Ohio Committee for Severe Weather Awareness is comprised of 16 agencies and organizations that are 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 and other severe weather safety and preparedness, visit the OCSWA website at www.weathersafety.ohio.gov.

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