



American Red Cross
National Weather Service
Ohio Department of Aging
Ohio Department of Education
Ohio Department of Health
Ohio Department of Insurance

Ohio Department of Natural Resources
Ohio Emergency Management Agency
Emergency Management Association of Ohio
Ohio Insurance Institute
Ohio News Network
Division of the State Fire Marshal

Bob Taft, Governor of Ohio

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact: C.J. Couch, Ohio EMA – (614) 799-3695

SPRINGTIME IS GOOD TIME TO PREPARE FOR SEVERE WEATHER

March 13-19 is Severe Weather Awareness Week

(COLUMBUS, OH) – Governor Bob Taft encourages Ohioans – young and old – to take time next week to create a weather preparedness plan and review safety steps to take during inclement weather. Severe Weather Awareness Week is March 13-19.

“For more than two years, Ohio residents have had to recover from year-round floods, tornadoes and other severe natural disasters,” said Taft. “Severe Weather Awareness Week is the opportune time to learn about the dangers of tornadoes and floods and what safety measures to take to protect your family, business and property.”

Flooding is Ohio’s number one natural disaster occurrence. Last year, the state endured severe flooding during the months of January, May and September, which that resulted in federal disaster declarations. Already this year, 59 Ohio counties are eligible for a variety of federal disaster assistance following severe ice storms, snow storms and flooding that occurred between Dec. 22, 2004 and Feb. 1, 2005. To date, more than \$2.3 million has been approved for federal individual assistance for 18 counties.

Tornadoes are the state’s second-highest natural disaster threat, and have struck two years in a row during the month of November. Ohio’s prime tornado season is April through July. This year, as part of Severe Weather Awareness Week, Ohio will conduct a statewide tornado drill at 9:50 a.m., Wednesday, March 16. Counties may sound warning sirens and the Emergency Alert System will broadcast a test message. Schools and businesses are encouraged to practice their tornado drills during this time.

“With all of the flooding and winter storms we’ve been through, I cannot stress enough the importance of severe weather preparedness,” said Nancy Dragani, executive director for the Ohio Emergency Management Agency (Ohio EMA). “Every home, school and business should have a disaster preparedness plan, a disaster supply kit and a NOAA Weather Radio to stay aware of local storm watches and warnings.”

Ohio EMA is one of 12 state agencies and organizations that represent the Ohio Committee for Severe Weather Awareness. For nearly 30 years the committee has been dedicated in educating Ohioans on severe weather safety and preparedness. Other members include the American Red Cross, the National Weather Service, Ohio Insurance Institute, Ohio News Network, the State Fire Marshal, the Emergency Management Association of Ohio, and the Ohio departments of Aging, Education, Health, Insurance, and Natural Resources.

To view the spring preparedness guide: www.ema.ohio.gov/PDFs/Severe_Weather/Spring2005.pdf

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“Teaching Ohioans Severe Weather Safety and Preparedness”

www.ema.ohio.gov/Weather.htm