



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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GOVERNOR TAFT ASKS, “ARE YOU PREPARED FOR SEVERE WEATHER?”

Ohio’s Severe Weather Awareness Week is March 26 – April 1

Columbus, OH – Governor Bob Taft has proclaimed the week of March 26 through April 1, 2006 as “Severe Weather Awareness Week,” and encourages all Ohioans to review safety precautions now to protect themselves and their property from the damaging affects of severe weather.

“I urge all Ohioans to get a family preparedness kit, make a plan and be informed,” said Taft. “The time to prepare for natural disasters is now. Knowing what to do when disaster strikes can make all the difference when seconds count.”

While Ohio will not experience a storm with the magnitude of a Hurricane Katrina, it is possible for the state to endure widespread flooding or heavy winds from a tornado. In fact, flooding is Ohio’s number one natural disaster, with tornadoes placing second. Flooding can occur at any time during any season. Ohio’s tornado season is typically April through July, although tornadoes, too, have hit during any random month.

This year, as part of Severe Weather Awareness Week, a statewide tornado drill is scheduled for 9:50 a.m. on Wednesday, March 29. Counties will sound their warning sirens and the Emergency Alert System will broadcast a test message. The Ohio Committee for Severe Weather Awareness encourages schools and businesses to practice their tornado drills during this time.

“Springtime is a good time to plan and practice severe weather preparedness,” said Nancy Dragani, executive director of the Ohio Emergency Management Agency. “Every household, school and business should have a NOAA Weather Radio and an emergency preparedness plan. In addition to having a radio and an emergency preparedness plan, every household should maintain a disaster supply kit with enough food, water and supplies to sustain individuals for a minimum of 72 hours.”

Ohio EMA is one of 12 state agencies and organizations that represent the Ohio Committee for Severe Weather Awareness. Since 1978, 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.

For further information on preparedness activities log on to www.ema.ohio.gov, www.ocswa.ohio.gov, www.fema.gov or www.ready.gov .

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“Teaching Ohioans Severe Weather Safety and Preparedness”

www.ocswa.ohio.gov