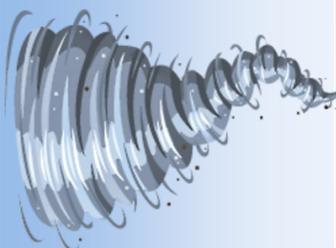


## Monthly Campaign April-SWAW



# Emergency Management Severe Weather Awareness Week (SWAW) April 13-17, 2020



## What is Severe Weather Awareness Week (SWAW)?

During this week, the Department of Public Safety and the National Weather Service will be promoting severe weather safety and emergency preparedness information.

This is the perfect time for families, communities, school and local businesses to review and talk about their emergency plans and how they can prepare for the upcoming severe weather season.

**Each day of the week focuses on a different weather safety topic.**

- Monday:** Alerts and Warnings
- Tuesday:** Severe Weather, Lightning & Hail
- Wednesday:** Floods
- Thursday:** Tornadoes
- Friday:** Extreme Heat



### Why do we have Severe Weather Awareness Week?

Minnesota experiences an average of 28 tornadoes per year according to the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR). The top severe weather hazards in Minnesota are severe storms, floods, tornadoes and extreme heat.

In order to be prepared it is important to understand the threats and know what to do when severe weather hits. Take advantage of SWAW to review your own, and your family's, emergency procedures or prepare for weather-related hazards.

## Preparation for...

### Your Family

- ✓ Create or update emergency plans with your entire family so everyone knows what to do in an emergency. Ensure everyone has up-to-date contact info and knows what to do.
- ✓ Practice your family plan during the tornado drills on April 16. Have everyone build a family emergency kit together.
- ✓ Check with places your family spends time, such as schools, workplaces, churches, markets or sports facilities to learn what their emergency plans are.
- ✓ Share the plans for these areas with your entire family and talk about what you would do if your family was not together during a disaster.



### Your Neighborhood

- ✓ Help prepare your neighborhood by asking, "What's your plan?" Make sure your plans are compatible. Find out who has special needs and might need help in an emergency.
- ✓ Plan with your neighborhood. Ask your homeowners association, your tenants group or neighborhood association to make emergency preparedness an agenda item during your next meeting. Make sure there is an evacuation plan for your neighborhood.
- ✓ Host a neighborhood preparedness meeting. Invite your local emergency manager to help lead the discussions.



### Your Community

- ✓ Include preparedness activities at community events. Consider local events already scheduled in your community, such as state or county fairs, festivals, parades or sporting events.
- ✓ Encourage local governments and civic groups to help. Ask local scouts, Lions, chambers of commerce, etc., to distribute emergency preparedness information, recruit volunteers and discuss preparedness plans within your community.
- ✓ Host a local preparedness fair. Reach out to prominent organizations in your community, such as faith-based and community organizations, businesses and schools to help coordinate a preparedness fair.



# Types of Warnings

## Weather Warning

- A dangerous weather event is occurring or imminent.
- Likely significant threat to life or property.
- Take protective action immediately.

## Weather Watch

- Weather conditions are favorable for a hazardous weather event.
- Stay alert to changing conditions.
- Make alternate plans.
- Be aware of possible shelter or evacuation routes.

## Weather Advisory

- Less hazardous weather conditions or less specific locations.
- Weather may still pose significant safety risk or travel problems.
- Situations are possible that could threaten life or property.



## What is one way I can show support this year?

Every year Severe Weather Awareness Week promotes and reminds individuals, families, businesses, school and institutions that it is essential to plan ahead for Minnesota's severe spring and summer weather. Stearns County wants you to be informed and involved in your community to be more resilient to disaster this year.

One example to participate in this years SWAW is to participate in the statewide tornado drills on Thursday, April 16th at 1:45 pm and 6:45 pm.

# DISASTER PREPAREDNESS

**Gather Documents and Cash**

- Store important documents
- Keep a stash of cash

**Evaluate your Home**

- STRUCTURAL SAFETY**: Make sure your home is bolted to the foundation
- PLUMBING**: Educate family to shut off waterlines
- ELECTRICAL**: Learn how to shut off the electricity
- GAS**: Educate everyone to shut off the gas

**Make an Emergency Plan**

- Identify a safe place in each room
- Practice drills of evacuation
- Learn how to do first aid

**SUPPLIES AND TOOLS YOU NEED**

- FOOD AND WATER**: One gallon of water per person per day, Nonperishable food or canned goods
- SHELTER/CLOTHING**: Sleeping bags and blankets, Sturdy Shoes, Stove and fuel Jacket
- FIRST AID, HYGIENE**: First aid handbook, Bandages, Medicine, Towelettes
- Flashlight**, **Portable radio**, **Whistle**, **Rope**, **Candles**, **Batteries**, **Swiss knife**, **Crowbar**

## Did you know?

- ❄ From 2007 to 2017, there were 31,947 injuries and 5,914 deaths directly linked to severe weather in the United States.
- ❄ Raindrops can be the size of a housefly and fall at more than 30kmph.
- ❄ About 2,000 thunderstorms rain down on Earth every minute.
- ❄ A 2003 heatwave turned grapes to raisins before they were picked from the vine!



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## Emergency Management

# Severe Weather Facts & Myths

**Myth:** Highway and interstate overpasses are safe shelters against a tornado.

**Fact:** Overpasses can concentrate the tornado winds, causing them to be significantly stronger. This places the people under them in an even more dangerous situation. In recent years, several people seeking shelter beneath overpasses have been killed or severely injured. Being above ground level during a tornado is dangerous.

**Myth:** The low pressure from a tornado causes buildings to explode. Opening the windows will equalize the pressure, saving the building.

**Fact:** Opening the windows in an attempt to equalize pressure will have no effect. It is the violent winds and debris that cause the most structural damage. It is more important for you to move to a safe area away from windows and exterior walls. With a tornado, every second counts, so use your time wisely and take cover.

**Myth:** It's not raining here, and skies above me are clear, therefore I am safe from lightning.

**Fact:** Lightning can strike many miles away from the thunderstorm. If storms are in your area, but skies happen to be clear above you, that certainly does not imply you are safe from lightning. Though these "Bolts from the Blue" are infrequent, lightning strikes 10 to 15 miles away from the storm are not out of the question.



## Resources

Minnesota Tornado History and Statistics (MNDNR)  
<https://bit.ly/33XvTje>

Severe Weather Awareness Week (HSEM)  
<https://bit.ly/343rwDI>

National Weather Service (NWS Awareness and Preparedness Calendar)  
<https://bit.ly/2yixkqp>