

Public Information Statement
National Weather Service Albany NY
800 AM EDT TUE APRIL 29 2014

...Severe Weather Awareness Week Continues...

April 27 to May 3 is severe weather awareness week in New York...Vermont...Connecticut...and Massachusetts. All residents are urged to be weather ready by protecting themselves from the hazards of flooding...tornadoes and severe thunderstorms.

Today we review **severe thunderstorms**.

Severe thunderstorms are defined as thunderstorms with wind speeds of 58 mph or greater and or hail of one inch in diameter or larger. Severe thunderstorms most frequently occur during the warm months...but happen in all seasons and at all times of the day.

Thunderstorms require moisture...lift and unstable air to develop. Moisture is necessary for the clouds and rain. Lift is usually supplied by warm or cold fronts...sea or lake breezes...mountains...or the sun's heat. Lift supplied to moisture in an unstable environment results in the development of thunderstorms. Thunderstorms progress through three stages...developing...mature...and dissipating. It is in the mature stage that thunderstorms are typically most dangerous...capable of producing severe weather.

Although the National Weather Service issues warnings for only those thunderstorms expected to meet warning criteria...all thunderstorms are dangerous. By definition...thunderstorms contain lightning. **If you can hear thunder...you can be struck by lightning.** Once you hear thunder...seek shelter immediately in a safe structure. **Most lightning fatalities occur when people are caught outdoors. If the thunder roars...go indoors.**

The National Weather Service issues severe thunderstorm watches and warnings to alert the public to a severe thunderstorm threat. A severe thunderstorm watch means that severe thunderstorms are possible. Continue with your daily routine...but be ready to take quick action should a severe thunderstorm warning be issued. **A severe thunderstorm warning means that severe thunderstorms are imminent or occurring. Seek shelter immediately.**

Severe thunderstorms can kill and injure. Severe thunderstorm warnings should be taken seriously. You should prepare for severe thunderstorms. **Develop a severe weather safety plan.** Identify safe shelters where you can go should a severe thunderstorm threaten. **Know the basic weather safety terms.** Keep tuned to your favorite media outlet for the latest National Weather Service statements concerning severe thunderstorms.

NOAA Weather Radio offers one way to receive immediate relay of severe weather warnings. Many local television and radio stations also broadcast weather alerts. Computers and wireless devices can also receive warnings. The Red Cross...many state emergency management agencies and private vendors have wireless applications that will alert you of severe weather by relaying national weather service warnings.

For more information on severe weather awareness week...go to our web site www.weather.gov. Then click on eastern New York or western New England. Finally...select our severe weather awareness link.

Tomorrow we take a look at weather safety and preparedness.