

New York and Pennsylvania Severe Weather Awareness Week April 24th to April 30th, 2016

Severe Weather Safety

Kat Hawley

NOAA's National Weather Service

Binghamton NY



Introduction to Severe Weather Awareness Week 2016 Safety

- Why should you have a plan?
- Thunderstorm Safety
- Lightning Safety
- Flash Flood Safety
- Tornado Safety
- How can I get weather information?



Severe Weather Safety



Have a Plan!

Sometimes you may only have minutes to take action to get to safety when severe weather strikes.

Make a drill and practice!

Thunderstorm Safety

- Listen to the local news or your NOAA Weather Radio.
- When you're outside, keep a lookout for signs of a storm. Watch out for darkening skies, lightning or increasing winds.
- Avoid electrical equipment or corded phones.
- Stay away from windows.
- If you are driving and find yourself in a severe thunderstorm, pull off on the side of the road. Do not park under overpasses.
- Move into a safe building if you find yourself outside during a thunderstorm.



Photo: Barb McGilvray

Lightning Safety

All Thunderstorms Produce Lightning usually without warning



- Avoid being the tallest object
- Avoid standing next to tall objects such as trees and power line poles
- If you are in a group, spread out to avoid the current traveling between group members.
- If you are in a forest, stay near a lower stand of trees.
- If you are camping in an open area, set up camp in a valley, ravine or other low area.
- Stay away from water, wet items, such as ropes and metal objects.

Lightning: What You Need To Know

If outside...

- No place is safe outside during a thunderstorm.
- If you hear thunder, lightning is close enough to strike you.
- Wait 30 minutes after you hear thunder before resuming normal activities.

If inside...

- Stay off electrical equipment
- Avoid plumbing
- Stay away from windows and doors
- Do not lie on concrete floors or lean on concrete walls.



Flash Flood Safety

Flash Flooding can occur with little to no warning

Create a Communications Plan

It is very important during an emergency to communicate with your family and friends. Make a phone tree. Communication helps keep your mind at ease especially when a natural disaster occurs.



Create an Emergency Kit

It is good practice to have enough food and water to last you and your family for three days when an emergency strikes. Also, keep a first aid kit in case someone gets hurt along with a flashlight. This kit should have foods that do not need refrigeration and are easy to prepare. Your kit should also have a battery powered radio along with extra batteries to remain informed.



Flash Flood Safety

Always have a plan! Know what to do and where to go!!!

- Always stay informed
- Obey evacuation orders
- Practice electrical safety
- Plan for pets



- Turn around, don't drown!
- Only two feet of water will move most vehicles
- Six inches of water will knock you off your feet
- Stay away from creeks and ditches

- Avoid flood waters
- Avoid disaster areas
- Wait for the "All Clear" before returning to your homes and businesses.



Tornado Safety

Tornados do happen in New York and Pennsylvania. Always have a plan.



Tornado Safety

Practice, Practice, Practice a tornado drill!!!!

Take Cover!!

Inside...

First choice: Basement!

Find an area of sturdy protection. Cover yourself with a sleeping bag or mattress.

Second choice: Lowest floor, center room.

Find a small room, away from windows, usually a bathroom/closet. Crouch as low as possible to the floor. Face downward cover your head with your hands.

If you are in a mobile home... GET OUT! These are not safe. Have a plan!!!

Outside...

In a car:

Seek shelter in a sturdy building. DO NOT hide under an overpass.

Open Outdoors:

Lie flat and face down on the ground. Protect the back of your head with your arms. Get as far away from trees and cars as you can.



NOAA Weather Radio

All Hazards Weather Radio

- Special radio with an audio alarm that goes off whenever the National Weather Service issues a warning for your area.
- Could be a life saver someday!
- Especially at night when you are not apt to be on the computer, watching TV, or listening to the radio.
- Weather radios are affordable and can be bought at many locations.



WATCH vs. WARNING

CAUTION

Watch the Sky

Watch- “Stand-by”

Conditions are favorable for severe weather in or near the watch area. Watches are issued for tornadoes, severe thunderstorms and flash floods. Issued by the Storm Prediction Center

DANGER

Take Cover Now

Warning- “Activated”

The severe weather event is imminent or occurring in the warned area. Warnings are issued for tornadoes, severe thunderstorms, flash floods and river flooding. Issued by NWS Binghamton for central New York and northeast Pennsylvania.