

PUBLIC INFORMATION STATEMENT  
NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE WILMINGTON NC  
800 AM EDT MON MAR 4 2013

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SEVERE WEATHER AWARENESS WEEK IN  
NORTH CAROLINA AND SOUTH CAROLINA  
MARCH 3 - MARCH 9  
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This week has been declared North and South Carolina's Severe Weather Awareness week for 2013. In addition, this week is also NOAA and FEMA's National Severe Weather Preparedness Week.

Today's theme is: *Be a Force of Nature: Know your risk*

Each year many people are killed or seriously injured by severe weather, including tornadoes and other types of severe weather, despite advance warning. In 2012, tornadoes were reported in 46 states. Across the nation, there were 450+ weather-related fatalities, more than 2,600 injuries, and over \$1.6 billion in damage. In North Carolina alone, there were 21 tornadoes which injured 22 people and resulted in over 19 million dollars in damage.

Because severe weather knows no boundaries and affects every individual, we're calling on people across the state and across the country to **"be a force of nature"** in their communities and prepare for severe weather.

The first step in **being a force of nature** is knowing your risk. Here are a few statistics about severe weather risks in the Carolinas:

- The Carolinas experience about over 60 thunderstorm days per year.
- While tornadoes can happen anywhere in the state, climate analysis suggests that more tornadoes occur in the southeast, south-central region, and eastern piedmont and coastal plain regions of North Carolina.
- Severe gusts of wind from a thunderstorm called downbursts or straight line winds are a serious danger.
- Over the past several years, there have been thousands of reports of large hail and damaging winds in the Carolinas resulting in over 100 million dollars in damage.
- There have been 20 lightning fatalities in North Carolina during the past 10 years, as well as 10 lightning fatalities in South Carolina.

In addition, there are several great web sites, such as [ready.gov/severe-weather](http://ready.gov/severe-weather), or [readync.org](http://readync.org), which provide information about what your community could expect to face this severe weather season.

It is especially important to stay informed by having multiple sources for weather alerts, such as NOAA Weather Radio, NWS Weather Wire Service, the NWS web site at Weather.gov, and NWS alert subscription service at [www.weather.gov/subscribe](http://www.weather.gov/subscribe). Take a moment to see if your cell phone is equipped to receive Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA), free messages sent directly to your cell phone from public safety officials such as the National Weather Service to warn you about imminent threats like severe weather, AMBER Alerts or Presidential alerts. For individuals with access and functional needs, there are adaptive NOAA weather radios available through North Carolina's Department of Health and Human Services.

Finally, encourage your friends, family, neighbors, and co-workers to do the same and learn about their severe weather risks. This is what is meant by being a force of nature.