

PUBLIC INFORMATION STATEMENT
NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE WILMINGTON NC
TUE MAR 4 2014

SEVERE WEATHER AWARENESS WEEK IN
NORTH CAROLINA AND SOUTH CAROLINA
MARCH 2 - MARCH 8

This week has been declared North and South Carolina's Severe Weather Awareness week for 2014. In addition, this week is also NOAA and FEMA's National Severe Weather Preparedness Week.

Today's theme is: *Be a Force of Nature: Develop an Emergency Plan*

When you pledge to prepare, you take the first step to making sure that you and your family are prepared for severe weather. This includes developing a family emergency and communications plan. In short, know what to do before severe weather strikes by creating an emergency plan today.

Your family may not be together when a disaster strikes, so it is important to plan in advance: how you will get to a safe place; how you will contact one another; how you will get back together; and what you will do in different situations.

The web site Ready.gov has made it simple for you to make a family emergency plan. You can download the Family Emergency Plan and fill out the sections before printing it or emailing it to your family and friends.

You should also inquire about emergency plans at places where your family spends time: work, daycare and school, faith organizations, sports events and commuting. If no plans exist, consider volunteering to help create one. Talk to community leaders, your colleagues, neighbors and members of faith or civic organizations about how you can work together in the event of an emergency. You will be better prepared to safely reunite your family and loved ones during an emergency if you think ahead and communicate with others in advance.

Planning for severe weather also includes...

- Ensure that you and your family members know about your surroundings and risk for specific weather.
- Have an emergency plan in place, and know what to do before severe weather strikes. Stay informed by having multiple sources for weather alerts.
- Exercise the plan with your family and post it in your home where visitors can see it.
- As part of tailoring your plans, consider working with others to create networks of neighbors, relatives, friends and co-workers who will assist each other in an

emergency. Discuss your needs and responsibilities and how people in the network can assist each other with communication, care of children, pets, specific needs like the operation of durable medical equipment or how we can inform someone with a hearing loss about impending severe weather .

- Identify an appropriate shelter in your home, neighborhood and community ahead of time. Share this with your neighbors.
- Learn how to strengthen your home and business against severe weather. Pass this on at a community gathering, local service organizations or faith-based meeting.
- Find out from local government emergency management how you will be notified for each kind of disaster and sign up for additional alerts through social media and local news. Understand these local warning systems and signals and share your knowledge with your coworkers, friends. Email these resources to your friends, post to your social media account.

Visit ready.gov/severe-weather for more on family preparedness for severe weather and to download a copy of the Family Emergency Plan. Once you develop your emergency plan, be a force of nature by encouraging your friends, family, neighbors, and coworkers to do the same.