Skywarn Spotter Training 2015

Here are the remaining scheduled Skywarn Talks for 2015.

April
20: 7pm CDT: Grant County — Milbank Firehall
21: 7pm CDT: Day County — Community room of Day County Courthouse in Webster
22: 1pm MDT: Dewey County — Eagle Butte Bingo Hall
23: 6pm CDT: Brown County — Basement of county courthouse in Aberdeen
27: 7pm CDT: Marshall County — Britton Firehall

There are no requirements needed to take class, other than a general interest in severe weather and the willingness to pass your weather report onto the authorities. Classes are still being scheduled, so please check the following page for any additions to this list.

http://www.weather.gov/abr/skywarnschedule

If you have any questions or for more information, you can contact James Scarlett, Meteorologist in Charge
Severe Weather Awareness Week 2015

April 13-17 - Minnesota
April 20-24 – South Dakota

Severe Weather Weeks are a time to turn one’s attention from the cold and snow of winter, to the heat and severe weather experienced during the spring and summer. Now is the time to review severe weather plans and see if any changes need to be made. For example, if your family gets separated during an emergency or disaster, has a “check in” point of contact been established, preferably out of state?

NOAA’s National Weather Service, in partnership with state and local emergency management agencies, will hold drills during the awareness weeks. For Minnesota, a practice tornado watch will be issued for the entire state at 1pm CDT on Thursday April 16. A test tornado warning will be issued at 1:45, and again at 6:55pm that evening for participating counties. You can see more information about Minnesota’s Severe Weather Awareness Week at the following link:


For South Dakota, the test tornado watch will be issued on Wednesday April 22 at 10 am CDT/9 am MDT. The test tornado warning will be issued at 10:15 am CDT/9:15 am MDT. You can see more information about South Dakota’s Severe Weather Awareness Week at the following link:


It is usually during these test warnings that some towns will test their tornado sirens with schools and businesses practicing their tornado drill procedures. This is also a great opportunity to review emergency plans and procedures, and conduct emergency drills at home.
A Particularly Dangerous Situation (PDS) watch is issued when the Storm Prediction Center (SPC) feels that there is an enhanced risk of very severe and life-threatening weather, usually in the form of a major tornado outbreak, or a long-lived, extreme derecho. In the case of tornadoes, SPC has a high confidence that multiple strong (EF2-EF3 on the Enhanced Fujita Scale) or violent tornadoes (EF4-EF5 on the Enhanced Fujita Scale) will occur in the watch area. PDS watches are rare, typically less than 3% of all watches issued during the convective season. On average, 1000 watches are issued across the country per year. The average number of PDS watches issued per year is 24. No area has averaged more than 2.5 PDS watches per year.

All tornadoes are potentially dangerous, and most EF2-EF5 tornado events still occur in regular Tornado Watches. The lack of PDS wording should in no way be interpreted as downplaying the threat to life and property. However, when the PDS wording is included in the wording, the threat is to be considered as substantially higher.

If you happen to hear of a PDS watch being issued for your area some time this warm season, your awareness of the weather should be very high. Be sure to monitor your local media or NOAA weather radio to stay abreast of the possible violent weather conditions.
In 2014, there were eight weather and climate disaster events with losses exceeding $1 billion each across the United States. Overall, these events killed numerous people and had significant economic effects on the areas impacted.

Yet, being prepared for severe weather doesn’t have to be complicated or expensive. A few simple steps, such as having a disaster supplies kit, obtaining a NOAA Weather Radio and creating a Family Emergency Plan could help save your life.

Additionally, severe weather poses unique hazards for workers and employers. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) provides resources for workplace preparedness for and response to severe weather emergencies, including tornadoes. OSHA also provides information for workers involved in response and recovery operations for severe weather events. OSHA and NOAA encourage workers and employers to be aware of weather forecasts so that they can be better prepared.

When it comes to severe weather, we ask that you know your risk, take action and be an example in your community. Be a Force of Nature and help the National Weather Service build a Weather-Ready Nation, one that is prepared for severe weather whenever and wherever it strikes.

For further information, check out the following site: http://www.nws.noaa.gov/com/weatherreadynation
New Storm Prediction Center Risk Categories

The National Weather Service Storm Prediction Center has changed its Day 1, Day 2 and Day 3 categorical severe weather outlook products. Previously, there were 4 categories: See Text, Slight, Moderate and High. However, based on research and feedback from the public, the categories will now be broken into 5 sections: Marginal, Slight, Enhanced, Moderate and High. Check out the graphics below for a better idea of what these changes look like and what the different categories mean.

Understanding Severe Thunderstorm Risk Categories

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>THUNDERSTORMS</td>
<td>No severe* thunderstorms expected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(no label)</td>
<td>Lightning/flooding threats exist with all thunderstorms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 - MARGINAL</td>
<td>Isolated severe thunderstorms possible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(MRGL)</td>
<td>Limited in duration and/or coverage and/or intensity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 - SLIGHT</td>
<td>Scattered severe storms possible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(SLGT)</td>
<td>Short-lived and/or not widespread, isolated intense storms possible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 - ENHANCED</td>
<td>Numerous severe storms possible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ENH)</td>
<td>More persistent and/or widespread, a few intense</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 - MODERATE</td>
<td>Widespread severe storms likely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(MDT)</td>
<td>Long-lived, widespread and intense</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 - HIGH</td>
<td>Widespread severe storms expected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(HIGH)</td>
<td>Long-lived, very widespread and particularly intense</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* NWS defines a severe thunderstorm as measured wind gusts to at least 58 mph, and/or hail to at least one inch in diameter, and/or a tornado. All thunderstorm categories imply lightning and the potential for flooding. Categories are also tied to the probability of a severe weather event within 25 miles of your location.
The Effect of Heat on Cars

Heat remains one of the leading weather related killers in the United States. One contributor is that each year, dozens of children and untold number of pets left in parked vehicles die from hyperthermia – a condition that occurs when the body absorbs more heat than it can handle. Hyperthermia can even happen on relatively mild days. Although it may seem like a solution, leaving the windows slightly open does not significantly decrease the heating rate of the car. Always play it safe and make sure you beat the heat this summer!
Three Month Outlooks—April through June

Temperature Outlook for April through June

Precipitation Outlook for April through June
Spring: the music of open windows.

~ Terri Gillemets