

Public Information Statement
National Weather Service Albany NY
800 AM EDT Mon Apr 30 2018

...Severe Weather Awareness Week Continues...

April 29 to May 5 is Severe Weather Awareness Week in New York, Connecticut, Massachusetts and Vermont. Everyone is urged to be weather ready by protecting themselves from the hazards of flooding, tornadoes and severe thunderstorms.

Eastern New York and western New England get their share of severe weather. In an average year, about ten tornadoes occur in New York and another 6 occur across New England, and hundreds of severe thunderstorms rumble across the Northeast. In 2017, the Village of Hoosick Falls, New York was inundated by destructive flash flooding.

Today we review severe weather terms and definitions.

Severe thunderstorms are defined as those thunderstorms that produce winds of 58 mph or greater and or hail of one inch in diameter or larger. A severe thunderstorm watch means that severe thunderstorms are possible over the next several hours. You should continue with your daily routine, but be prepared to move to a place of safety should a severe thunderstorm warning be issued. A severe thunderstorm warning means that severe thunderstorms are imminent or occurring. A Warning implies a significant threat to life and property. You should seek shelter immediately when a severe thunderstorm warning is issued.

Tornadoes are violently rotating columns of air in contact with the ground and attached to the cloud base above. Like a severe thunderstorm watch, a tornado watch means that tornadoes are possible over the next several hours. A tornado warning means that a tornado is imminent or occurring. A tornado warning implies an immediate threat to life and property. Take shelter in a basement or interior room immediately.

Flash flooding is a rapid rise, within six hours, of water along a stream or in a low lying urban area. The most common cause of flash flooding is downpours associated with thunderstorms. A flash flood watch means that conditions are favorable for flash flooding. Continue with your daily activities, but be prepared to head to a place of safety or avoid low-lying areas should a flash flood warning be issued. A flash flood warning means that flooding is imminent or occurring. Flood waters can rise rapidly. Seek high ground immediately when a flash flood warning is issued.

The National Weather Service issues severe thunderstorm, tornado and flash flood warnings for small areas likely to be impacted by the storm, rather than for an entire county. This method narrows the area for which a warning is valid, eliminating unnecessary warnings for areas of a county where no threat exists.

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, state emergency management agencies and FEMA have wireless applications that will alert you of severe weather by relaying National Weather Service warnings.

Finally, help make the United States a weather ready nation. Share this information with everyone you know.

Tomorrow we discuss severe thunderstorms.

NWS Albany Staff