

PUBLIC INFORMATION STATEMENT
NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE RALEIGH NC
800 AM EST MON MAR 3 2014

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

This week has been declared North 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: 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 2013, there were seven weather and climate disaster events with losses exceeding \$1 billion each across the United States. These events included five severe weather and tornado events, a major flood event, and the western drought/heat wave. Overall, these events killed 109 people and had significant economic effects on the areas impacted. In North Carolina alone, there were 10 tornadoes which injured several people and resulted in over 6 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 North Carolina's severe weather risks:

- North Carolina experiences about 40 to 50 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 and can result in injuries and fatalities.
- Hail is a threat to life and property and has been responsible for millions of dollars' worth of damage in North Carolina.
- There have been 12 lightning fatalities in the state during the past 10 years.

In addition, there are several great web sites, such as ready.gov/severe-weather, or 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. 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.