



2023 Version **Emergency Management Department**







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Severe weather

Are you ready for severe weather? Each year, Homeland Security and Emergency Management (HSEM) in collaboration with the National Weather Service Sponsors Severe Weather Awareness Week in Minnesota. The week is designed to refresh, remind, and educate everyone about the seasonal threats from severe weather and how to avoid them. It's also a great time to make and practice your emergency plan and build or refresh your emergency preparedness kit.

Statewide tornado drills

The most important events during Severe Weather Awareness Week are the two annual statewide tornado drills. Outdoor warning sirens will sound in a simulated tornado warning. The first drill is intended for institutions and businesses. The evening drill is intended for shift workers and families.

This annual public education event is designed to remind individuals, families, businesses, schools, and institutions that it's essential to plan for Minnesota's severe spring and summer weather. An informed, involved community is more resilient to disaster. Being prepared helps reduce the risks and costs of hazardous weather events. An easy way to get prepared is to participate in the statewide tornado drills on Thursday, April 20 at 1:45 p.m. and 6:45 p.m. They will provide an excellent opportunity for citizens to prepare their homes, families, neighborhoods, and communities! Each day of the week focuses on a different topic.

- Monday: Alerts and Warnings
- Tuesday: Severe Weather, Lightning, and Hail
- Wednesday: Floods
- Thursday: Tornadoes (with statewide tornado drills)
- Friday: Extreme Heat

Prepare your family

Create or update emergency plans with your entire family so everyone knows what to do in an emergency. Ensure everyone has up-to-date contact info and knows what to do.

- Practice your family plan during the tornado drills. Have everyone build a family emergency kit together.
- Check with places your family spends time, such as schools, workplaces, churches, markets, or sports facilities to learn what their emergency plans are.
- Share the plans for these areas with your entire family and talk about what you would do if your family was not together during a disaster.

Prepare your neighborhood

• Help prepare your neighborhood by asking, "What's your plan?" Make sure your plans are compatible. Find out who has special needs and might need help in an emergency.

• Plan with your neighborhood. Ask your homeowners association, your tenant's group or neighborhood association to make emergency preparedness an agenda item during your next meeting. Make sure there is an evacuation plan for your neighborhood.

• Host a neighborhood preparedness meeting. Invite your local emergency manager to help lead the discussions.

Prepare your community

- Include preparedness activities at community events. Consider local events already scheduled in your community, such as state or county fairs, festivals, parades, or sporting events.
- Encourage local governments and civic groups to help. Ask local scouts, Lions, chambers of commerce, etc., to distribute emergency preparedness information, recruit volunteers, and discuss preparedness plans within your community.
- Host a local preparedness fair. Reach out to prominent organizations in your community, such as faith-based and community organizations, businesses, and schools to help coordinate a preparedness fair.
- Find out how to create or participate in a Community Emergency Response Team (CERT).

Prepare your workplace

- Update and distribute emergency contact information to employees. Create and distribute a list of important emergency numbers. Designate critical function or emergency personnel.
- Organize an emergency preparedness procedures review with employees to review your company's emergency plans. Ensure everyone understands their roles in a "what if?" scenario.
- Host a disaster preparedness brown bag lunch for employees. Invite emergency managers to give a disaster preparedness briefing.
- Get a NOAA Weather Radio and put it on display in your break room or other high-traffic locations. Encourage employees to get their own for their homes as well.
- Send a copy of the facility emergency plan to employees have group meetings to review it.
- Showcase instructional videos or distribute preparedness information. Provide information online about training opportunities.
- Contact a local business continuity or emergency management professional. Work with company leadership to create or update disaster and continuity plans.
- Conduct office evacuation and shelter-in-place exercises and drills. Schedule an emergency exercise or drill. Once completed, evaluate, and decide if new procedures or training are needed. Consult with local responders or emergency managers to participate, observe, or advise.
- Distribute emergency preparedness messages. Include emergency preparedness messages in communication touch points such as e-mails, newsletters, and social media.

Prepare your school

Tornado drills are perfect opportunities for schools to conduct preparedness training, exercises and education. A carefully developed tornado drill should keep students and staff in good practice and work out any problems before a real event occurs.

- Large and easy-to-read maps or signs with arrows should be posted throughout the hallways directing people to the safe areas.
- If the school's alarm system relies on electricity, have a compressed-air horn or megaphone or other backup device to sound the alert in case of power failure.
- Make special provisions to evacuate and shelter students in portable classrooms.
- Plan and exercise procedures for any functional needs students to ensure mobility in an evacuation.
- Make sure several staff members are trained in how to turn off electricity and gas.
- Communicate the school emergency plan with parents and families. Explain the policy for keeping children at school beyond regular hours if threatening weather is expected.
- Educate the faculty and students about policies and warnings for severe weather.

- Establish and communicate the severe weather policy for sports or special events. Plan for gymnasiums, theaters, and lunchrooms to be evacuated in an emergency.
- Know the county in which your school sits and keep a highway map nearby to follow storm movement from weather bulletins. Online maps and weather sources can be valuable, but if the power is out, it helps to have paper maps.
- Make sure the school's NOAA Weather Radio is operating (with batteries) and can be heard. Know what the different warnings mean. Make sure the radio is properly programmed.
- Establish and practice the in-school emergency communications plan to ensure that all teachers, classes, and staff are informed of any emergency -including athletic fields or playgrounds.

More information about these emergency preparedness steps is provided on the FEMA Ready.gov, HSEM Weather Safety and National Weather Service websites.

Communication planning

the neighborhood and within your town.



Important Information

Fill in this information and keep a copy in a safe place, such as your purse or briefcase, your car, your office, and your disaster kit. Be sure to look it over every year and keep it up to date.

Out-of-Town Contact	Neighborhood Meeting Place:
Name:	
Home:	
Cell:	Perioral Mastine Place
Email:	Regional Meeting Place:
Facebook:	
Twitter:][
Work Information	School Information

Workplace:	
Address:	
Phone:	
Twitter:	
Evacuation Locatio	n:
Workplace:	
Address:	
Phone:	
Phone: Facebook:	



	School Information
School:	
Address:	
Facebook: _	
Twitter:	
Evacuation I	ocation:
School:	
Address:	
Phone:	
Facebook: _	
Twitter:	
Evacuation I	ocation:
School:	
Address:	
Phone:	
Evacuation I	ocation:

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Important Information (continued)

Family Information

mportant Medical Information:	
Name:	Date of Birth:
Social Security Number:	
mportant Medical Information:	
Name:	Date of Birth:
Social Security Number:	
mportant Medical Information:	
Name:	Date of Birth:
Social Security Number:	
mportant Medical Information:	
Name:	Date of Birth:
Social Security Number:	
mportant Medical Information:	
Name:	Date of Birth:
Social Security Number:	
mportant Medical Information:	
MM	

	Medical Contacts	
Doctor:		
Phone:		
Doctor:		
Phone:		-
Pediatrician:		
Phone:		
Dentist:		
Phone:		
Specialist:		
Specialist:		
Phone:		
Phone:		
	nnel:	
Phone:		

Insurance Information

Medical Insurance:	
Phone:	
Policy Number:	
Homeowners/Rental Insurance: Phone:	
Policy Number:	

Text, don't talk!

Unless you are in danger, send a text. Texts may have an easier time getting through than phone calls, and you don't want to tie up phone lines needed by emergency workers.

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When emergencies strike, public safety officials use timely and reliable systems to alert you. Here are different warning alerts you can get and how to get them.

Wireless emergency alerts (WEAs)

Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEAs) are short emergency messages from authorized federal, state, local, tribal, and territorial public alerting authorities that can be broadcast from cell towers to any WEAenabled mobile device in a locally targeted area. WEAs can be sent by state and local public safety officials, the National Weather Service, the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children and the President of the United States.

Image



- WEAs look like text messages but are designed to get your attention with a unique sound and vibration repeated twice.
- WEAs are no more than 360 characters and include the type and time of the alert, any action you should take and the agency issuing the alert.
- WEAs are not affected by network congestion and will not disrupt texts, calls or data sessions that are in progress.
- You are not charged for receiving WEAs and there is no need to subscribe.

If you are not receiving WEAs here are some tips to troubleshoot your mobile device:

- 1. Check the settings on your mobile device and review your user manual (you may be able to find this online too).
 - Older phones may not be WEA capable, and some cell phone models require you to enable WEAs.
 - Some mobile service providers call these messages "Government Alerts," or "Emergency Alert Messages."

2. Check with your wireless provider to see if they can resolve the issue.

- All major phone providers and some smaller providers participate in WEA.
- Federal Communications Commission (FCC) registry of WEA providers.

To provide comments or concerns about WEAs sent in your area contact local officials directly.

Emergency alert system (EAS)

The Emergency Alert System (EAS) is a national public warning system that allows the president to address the nation within 10 minutes during a national emergency. State and local authorities may also use the system to deliver important emergency information such as weather information, imminent threats, AMBER alerts and local incident information targeted to specific areas. Image



- The EAS is sent through broadcasters, satellite digital audio services, direct broadcast satellite providers, cable television systems and wireless cable systems.
- The President has sole responsibility for determining when the national-level EAS will be activated. FEMA and the FCC are responsible for national-level tests and exercises.
- The EAS is also used when all other means of alerting the public are unavailable.

NOAA Weather radio (NWR)

NOAA Weather Radio All Hazards (NWR) is a nationwide network of radio stations that broadcast continuous weather information from the nearest National Weather Service office based on your physical location.

Image



- NWR broadcasts official warnings, watches, forecasts, and other hazard information 24 hours a day, seven days a week.
- NWR also broadcasts alerts of non-weather emergencies such as national security or public safety threats through the Emergency Alert System.

FEMA mobile app

The FEMA App allows you to receive real-time weather and emergency alerts, send notifications to loved ones, locate emergency shelters in your area, get preparedness strategies and more. Image



- Receive real-time weather and emergency alerts from the National Weather Service for up to five locations nationwide.
- Find a nearby shelter if you need to evacuate to a safe space.
- Find out if your location is eligible for FEMA assistance, find Disaster Recovery Center locations, and get answers to your most pressing questions.

Wireless emergency alerts (WEA) FEMA FACTS

What are Wireless Emergency Alerts?

- Wireless Emergency Alerts, or WEAs, are free messages sent directly to your cellular phone, warning you about severe weather, AMBER Alerts and threats to safety in your area.
- WEAs are sent to you by your state and local public safety officials, the National Weather Service, the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, the U.S. Geological Survey, and the President.
- WEAs began in 2012 and should already be on your cellular phone or other wireless device.
- WEAs are no more than 360 characters and will provide brief critical information about a threat in your location or an AMBER emergency.
- The WEA notification is designed to get your attention and alert you with a unique sound and vibration.
- WEAs resemble a text message on your cellular phone but WEAs will not interrupt calls in progress.
- WEA messages allow alerts to be sent to cellular phones in a geographically targeted affected area.
- WEAs are one-way alerts to any cell phones in range of the cell tower, which ensures that authorities cannot collect any data from an individual.
- WEAs are not affected by network congestion.
- Wireless customers will not be charged for the delivery of WEA messages.

Unique sound & vibration

- The unique sound and vibration (Common Audio Attention Signal and Vibration Pattern) you receive when a WEA is sent are prescribed in Part 10 of the Code of Federal Regulations for use in Alert messaging only.
- The unique sound and vibration cadence are particularly helpful to people with visual or hearing disabilities.

Will I receive WEAs on my cell phone?

- To find out if your phone can receive WEA alerts, contact your wireless provider. All the major providers participate in WEA on a voluntary basis. It will take time for upgrades in infrastructure, coverage, and handset technology to allow WEA enhancements to reach all cellular customers.
- Wireless providers are selling devices with WEA capability included but not all handsets now on the market can receive WEAs. To learn how yours is configured, contact your wireless provider or phone manufacturer.
- WEA messages can save lives. Do not ignore these messages! WEAs contain basic information so if you receive a WEA, seek additional information from other sources such as radio or TV.

For more information visit https://www.fema.gov/ipaws. Contact the IPAWS Program Management Office at ipaws@fema.dhs.gov. IPAWS (Integrated Public Alert & Warning System) is a national system for local alerting that provides authenticated emergency alert and information messaging to the public through cell phones and internet applications using Wireless Emergency Alerts, and to radio and television via the Emergency Alert System

911 Call center

Respond. Engage. Educate.

Emergency call center

Our call center operators notify our police, fire, and ambulance teams that you need help.

When you call us, we:

- Listen to you
- Ask questions
- Coordinate a response

Every call is important, but threats to life and property are our highest priority.

Community outreach Our staff members enjoy meeting you and telling you about what we do.

Invite us to your next:

- Block party
- Neighborhood meetings
- Other school or community event



Don't hang up

- If we don't answer right away.
 - Let the phone continue to ring until we answer.
- If you call 911 by accident.

- If you hang up, we must call you back. This happens about 200 times a day and uses valuable time and resources.
- When we answer, tell us you called by accident.
- When you are talking to us.
 - Don't hang up until we end the call.
 - Help may be on the way while we are talking to you.
- If it's not safe for you to call, text 911.

Give details, answer questions, stay on the line

- Give us the details of your location, including:
 - Street address
 - Type of building
 - Intersections and landmarks
 - Specific room, apartment, floor where the incident happens
 - Anything that will help us find you
 - We can't get these details by tracking your cell or building phone
- Tell us what's happening.
- Describe suspects and their vehicles
- Answer our questions.
- Don't hang up. We can send help while we talk to you.
- Tell us if you want to speak to the officer or responder.

Notes

Emergency kit

After an emergency, you may need to survive on your own for several days. Being prepared means having your own food, water, and other supplies to last for several days. A disaster supplies kit is a collection of basic items your household may need in the event of an emergency.



Make sure your emergency kit is stocked with the items on the checklist below. Download a printable version to take with you to the store. Once you look at the basic items consider what unique needs your family might have, such as supplies for pets or seniors.

Basic disaster supplies kit

To assemble your kit store items in airtight plastic bags and put your entire disaster supplies kit in one or two easy-to-carry containers such as plastic bins or a duffel bag. A basic emergency supply kit could include the following recommended items:

- Water (one gallon per person per day for several days, for drinking and sanitation)
- Food (at least a several-day supply of non-perishable food)
- Battery-powered or hand crank radio and a NOAA Weather Radio with tone alert
- Flashlight
- First aid kit
- Extra batteries
- Whistle (to signal for help)
- Dust mask (to help filter contaminated air)
- Plastic sheeting and duct tape (to shelter in place)
- Moist towelettes, garbage bags and plastic ties (for personal sanitation)
- Wrench or pliers (to turn off utilities)
- Manual can opener (for food)
- Local maps
- Cell phone with chargers and a backup battery

Additional emergency supplies

Since Spring of 2020, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has recommended people include additional items in their kits to help prevent the spread of coronavirus or other viruses and the flu.

Consider adding the following items to your emergency supply kit based on your individual needs:

- Masks (for everyone ages 2 and above), soap, hand sanitizer, disinfecting wipes to disinfect surfaces
- Prescription medications. About half of all Americans take a prescription medicine every day. An emergency can make it difficult for them to refill their prescription or to find an open pharmacy. Organize and protect your prescriptions, over-the-counter drugs, and vitamins to prepare for an emergency.
- Non-prescription medications such as pain relievers, anti-diarrhea medication, antacids, or laxatives
- Prescription eyeglasses and contact lens solution
- Infant formula, bottles, diapers, wipes, and diaper rash cream
- Pet food and extra water for your pet
- Cash or traveler's checks
- Important family documents such as copies of insurance policies, identification and bank account records saved electronically or in a waterproof, portable container
- Sleeping bag or warm blanket for each person
- Complete change of clothing appropriate for your climate and sturdy shoes
- Fire extinguisher
- Matches in a waterproof container
- Feminine supplies and personal hygiene items
- Mess kits, paper cups, plates, paper towels and plastic utensils
- Paper and pencil
- Books, games, puzzles, or other activities for children

Maintaining your kit

After assembling your kit remember to maintain it so it's ready when needed:

- Keep canned food in a cool, dry place.
- Store boxed food in tightly closed plastic or metal containers.
- Replace expired items as needed.
- Re-think your needs every year and update your kit as your family's needs change.

Kit storage locations

Since you do not know where you will be when an emergency occurs, prepare supplies for home, work, and cars.

• **Home:** Keep this kit in a designated place and have it ready in case you have to leave your home quickly. Make sure all family members know where the kit is kept.

- Work: Be prepared to shelter at work for at least 24 hours. Your work kit should include food, water, and other necessities like medicines, as well as comfortable walking shoes, stored in a "grab and go" case.
- **Car**: In case you are stranded, keep a kit of emergency supplies in your car.

Notes

Home preparedness - evacuation & sheltering

Sheltering is appropriate when conditions require that you seek protection in your home, where you work or other location when other emergencies arise. The length of time you are required to take shelter may be short, such as during a tornado warning, or during a pandemic. In all cases, it is important that you stay informed and follow the instructions of local authorities.

During extended periods of sheltering, you will need to manage water and food supplies to make sure you and your family have what you need to get by. Read more about managing water and managing food.

Choosing to take shelter is necessary in many emergencies. This can mean: Stay-At- Home, going to a Mass Care Shelter, or Sheltering in Place. Here's the distinction:

Mass care shelter

Mass care shelters provide life sustaining services to disaster survivors. Even though mass care shelters often provide water, food, medicine, and basic sanitary facilities, you should plan to take your emergency supply kit with you so you will have the supplies you need. Mass care sheltering can involve living with many people in a confined space, which can be difficult and unpleasant.

Be prepared to take cleaning items with you like, soap, hand sanitizer, disinfecting wipes or general household cleaning supplies to disinfect surfaces. All shelters accept service animals, but many public shelters and hotels do not allow pets inside. Know a safe place where you can take your pets before disasters and emergencies happen.

Learn more by visiting: http://www.disasterassistance.gov/.

Sheltering in place

Whether you are at home, work or anywhere else you frequent regularly, there may be situations when it's best to stay where you are and avoid any uncertainty outside.

Here are some indicators and steps to take if the situation arises:

- Use common sense and available information to assess the situation and determine if there is immediate danger.
- If you see large amounts of debris in the air, or if local authorities say the air is badly contaminated you may want to take this kind of action.
- Here are some tips for sheltering in place:

- Local authorities may not immediately be able to provide information on what is happening and what you should do.
- Pay attention to local media outlets for official news and instructions as they become available.
- Bring your family and pets inside.
- Lock doors, close windows, air vents and fireplace dampers.
- Turn off fans, air conditioning and forced air heating systems.
- Take your emergency supply kit unless you have reason to believe it has been contaminated.
- Go into an interior room with few windows if possible.
- Seal all windows, doors and air vents with thick plastic sheeting and duct tape. Consider measuring and cutting the sheeting in advance to save time.
- Cut the plastic sheeting several inches wider than the openings and label each sheet.
- Duct tape plastic at corners first and then tape down all edges.
- Be prepared to improvise and use what you have on hand to seal gaps so that you create a barrier between yourself and any contamination.
- "Sealing a room" is considered a temporary protective measure to create a barrier between you and potentially contaminated air outside. This type of sheltering in place requires pre-planning, by purchasing plastic sheeting and duct tape that you would keep in your emergency supply kit.

Stay-at-home

Remain indoors as much as possible and try to only leave your home when necessary. You can still use outdoor spaces such as patios, porches, and yards. Outdoor activities such as walking, jogging and exercise are fine if you practice social distancing.

Essential services such as grocery shopping, the gas station, pharmacies and going to the Post Office are still fine to do.

Limit visitors if possible. Try to use video chatting.

Call the people you would normally text.

Electrical & utility safety

Follow these electrical safety tips to help keep your home fire safe.

Appliances

• Always plug major appliances, like refrigerators, stoves, washers, and dryers, directly into a wall outlet.

- Never use an extension cord with a major appliance it can easily overheat and start a fire.
- Always plug small appliances directly into a wall outlet.
- Unplug small appliances when you are not using them.
- Keep lamps, light fixtures, and light bulbs away from anything that can burn.
- Use light bulbs that match the recommended wattage on the lamp or fixture.

• Check electrical cords on appliances often. Replace cracked, damaged and loose electrical cords. Do not try to repair them.

Outlets

- Do not overload wall outlets.
- Insert plugs fully into sockets.
- Never force a three-prong cord into a two-slot outlet.
- Install tamper-resistant electrical outlets if you have young children.

Extension cords, power strips and surge protectors

- Replace worn, old or damaged extension cords right away.
- Use extension cords for temporary purposes only.
- Avoid putting cords where they can be damaged or pinched, like
- under a carpet or rug.
- Do not overload power strips.
- Use power strips that have internal overload protection.

Make sure all electrical work in your home is done by a qualified electrician! For more information and free resources, visit www.usfa.fema.gov/prevention/outreach

Tips for medications

- Talk to your doctor or pharmacist about how you can create an emergency supply of medicines.
- Keep a list of your prescription medicines. Include information about your diagnosis, dosage, frequency, medical supply needs and allergies.
- Store extra nonprescription drugs, like pain and fever relievers, antihistamines, and antidiarrheal medicines.
- Have a cooler and chemical ice packs available to chill medicines that need to be refrigerated.

Tips for people who are deaf or hard of hearing

- Weather radio (with text display and a flashing alert)
- Extra hearing-aid batteries
- Pen and paper (in case you must communicate with someone who does not know sign language)
- Battery operated lantern to enable communication by sign language or lip reading, especially when the electricity is out and it's dark.

Tips for people who are blind or have low vision

- Mark emergency supplies with Braille labels or large print. Keep a list of your emergency supplies and where you bought them on a portable flash drive or make an audio file that is kept in a safe place where you can access it.
- Keep communication devices for your needs, such as a Braille or deaf-blind communications device as part of your emergency supply kit.

Tips for people with speech disability

- If you use an augmentative communications device or other assistive technologies plan how you will evacuate with the devices or how you will replace equipment if it is lost or destroyed. Keep model information and note where the equipment came from (Medicaid, Medicare, private insurance, etc.).
- Plan how you will communicate with others if your equipment is not working, including laminated cards with phrases and/or pictogram.

Individuals with intellectual or developmental disabilities

- Keep handheld electronic devices charged and loaded with videos and activities.
- Purchase spare chargers for electronic devices and keep them charged.
- Include sheets and twine or a small pop-up tent (to decrease visual stimulation in a busy room or to provide instant privacy).
- Consider a pair of noise-canceling headphones to decrease auditory stimuli.
- Have comfort snacks available.

Tips for people with a mobility disability

- If you use a power wheelchair have a lightweight manual chair available as a backup if possible.
- Show others how to assemble, disassemble and operate your wheelchair.

- Purchase an extra battery for a power wheelchair or other battery-operated medical or assistive technology devices. If you can't purchase an extra battery, find out what agencies, organizations or local charitable groups can help you buy one. Always keep extra batteries charged.
- Consider keeping a patch kit or can of sealant for flat tires and/or extra inner tube if wheelchair or scooter is not puncture proof.
- Keep an extra mobility device such as a cane or walker if you use one.
- Keep a portable air pump for wheelchair tires.
- If you use a seat cushion to protect your skin or maintain your balance and you must evacuate, consider keeping an extra cushion on hand.
- Communicate with neighbors who can assist you if you need to evacuate the building.

Tips for individuals with alzheimer's and related dementia

- Do not leave the person alone. Even those who aren't prone to wandering away may do so in unfamiliar environments or situations.
- If evacuating, help manage the change in environment by bringing a pillow and blanket or other comforting items they can hold onto.
- When at a shelter, try to stay away from exits and choose a quiet corner.
- If there is an episode of agitation, respond to the emotions being expressed. For example, say "You're frightened and want to go home. It's ok. I'm right here with you."

Additional items

- Several days' supply of prescription medicines
- A list of all medications, dosage, and any allergies
- Extra eyeglasses, contacts, hearing aids and batteries
- A backup supply of oxygen
- A list of the style and serial number of medical devices (include special instructions for operating your equipment if needed)
- Copies of insurance and Medicare cards
- Contact information for doctors, relatives or friends who should be notified if you are hurt
- Pet food, extra water, collar with ID tag, medical records and other supplies for your service or support animal

Notes