



MEDIA RELEASE

STATE OF OHIO
Ohio Committee for Severe Weather Awareness

Mike DeWine, Governor ▪ www.weathersafety.ohio.gov

For Immediate Release: **March 17, 2023**

SPRING SEVERE WEATHER AWARENESS WEEK IS MARCH 19-25 ***Practice where to shelter during Ohio's Statewide Tornado Drill on March 22 at 9:50 a.m.***

COLUMBUS, OH – Severe weather can occur at any time of the year and Spring Severe Weather Awareness Week allows Ohioans the opportunity to learn the best ways to be prepared and stay safe during inclement weather.

“Severe weather can impact Ohio at any time of year, so it’s important that residents are prepared for the possibility of a weather emergency,” said Governor Mike DeWine. “Spring Severe Weather Awareness Week allows Ohioans the opportunity to learn more about severe weather and be prepared before, during, and after a storm.”

In a coordinated effort with the Ohio Committee for Severe Weather Awareness (OCSWA), the Ohio Emergency Management Agency, and the National Weather Service, Governor DeWine has proclaimed March 19-25 as Spring Severe Weather Awareness Week and is encouraging all Ohioans to prepare themselves for spring and summer weather hazards and home emergencies.

“Ohio’s weather can often be unpredictable, especially in the spring when temperatures fluctuate between warm and cold which can be a recipe for severe weather, or even tornadoes,” said Ohio Emergency Management Agency Executive Director Sima Merick. “We encourage all Ohioans to make or review an existing emergency plan and be prepared.”

At 9:50 a.m. on Wednesday, March 22, local communities can participate in a statewide tornado drill and test their emergency and sheltering plans. Ohio counties may use this time to sound and test their outdoor warning sirens and mass notification systems. Businesses, schools, and households are also encouraged to practice their tornado drills and emergency plans at this time.

Safety & Preparedness Tips - Know the Terms:

Tornado Watch - Be Prepared: When conditions are favorable for the development of tornadoes. Be ready to move to a place of safety if the watch is upgraded to a warning or if threatening weather approaches.

Tornado Warning - Take Action: When a tornado is imminent or has been sighted. Warnings indicate impending danger to life and property. [Seek safe shelter immediately.](#)

Prepare for Severe Weather and Home Emergencies: [Build a kit](#) and [make a plan](#). This includes having a severe weather kit for home and vehicle and creating an emergency plan/or updating your existing plan

Be Aware of Hazards in Your Area: Ohio’s weather hazards from early spring into summer include snowmelt and flooding, tornadoes, and thunderstorms. Visit the [OCSWA website](#) to learn more about severe weather safety and preparedness.

Prepare for a Flood: Learn and practice evacuation routes, shelter plans, and flash flood response. Gather supplies, including non-perishable foods, cleaning supplies, and water for several days, in case you must leave immediately or if services are cut off in your area.

Flooded Roadways: Never attempt to cross a flooded road on foot or in a vehicle. It only takes six inches of water to knock an adult off their feet, one foot of moving water can float a vehicle, and two feet of water can carry away most vehicles including pickup trucks and SUVs. Don’t chance it, find an alternative route! [Turn Around Don’t Drown®](#).

Outdoor Warning Sirens: Many Ohio counties have outdoor warning sirens that sound when severe weather is imminent. Outdoor warning sirens are designed to be heard outdoors.

Alerts and Notifications: Getting weather and emergency information from trusted sources is important. Have multiple means of receiving communications and always get your information from reliable sources such as the National Weather Service, local broadcast radio and television stations, and phone apps from trusted agencies. Other great sources for communications are the [Emergency Alert System \(EAS\)](#) which are messages sent over television and radio channels, [Wireless Emergency Alerts \(WEA\)](#) which are free notifications delivered to mobile devices as part of a public safety system, and a [NOAA All-Hazards Weather Radio](#).

To download a copy of Governor DeWine’s Spring Severe Weather Proclamations, [click here](#) or visit the Ohio Committee for Severe Weather Awareness website.

For students grades 1-6: The 2023 Ohio Severe Weather Poster Contest is accepting submissions until April 21, 2023. To learn more, and to view the complete contest rules and entry forms, visit the [Ohio Committee for Severe Weather Awareness website](#).

Follow OCSWA on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) during Spring Severe Weather Awareness Week for additional severe weather awareness safety and preparedness information.

Since 1978, the Ohio Committee for Severe Weather Awareness (OCSWA) has been dedicated in educating Ohioans about the natural disasters that typically affect the state and encourage Ohio residents to plan and prepare for severe weather incidents before they happen. **For additional information, contact:** Sandy Mackey, Ohio Emergency Management Agency

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