



National Weather Service

Detroit/Pontiac, MI



Mission Statement

The National Weather Service issues weather forecasts and warnings for the protection of life and property and to enhance the national economy.

Did you know?

The National Weather Service is the only agency able to issue weather watches and warnings in the United States.



Skywarn Weather Spotters

Skywarn Weather Spotters provide a valuable service to the National Weather Service by reporting storm damage, precipitation, and other observed weather phenomena. Please contact the NWS to find out when the next training class will be offered in your area.

National Weather Service Detroit/ Pontiac, MI

9200 White Lake Rd.
White Lake, Michigan 48386
<http://www.weather.gov/dtx>

Phone: 248-625-3309
Fax: 248-625-4834
Email: w-dtx.webmaster@noaa.gov
Richard.Pollman@noaa.gov

Weather Safety



Michigan residents are faced with hazardous weather conditions numerous times every year. These hazards range from strong winds to heavy snows to even severe thunderstorms and tornadoes. It is important for people to know what hazards are possible so they can take the appropriate precautions. Creating a plan that can be swiftly executed is the first step in protecting yourself and your family from dangerous weather conditions. This handout includes information on the various hazards that one may face in the state of Michigan along with safety advice from the experts!

Severe thunderstorms are one of the greatest threats that Michigan residents face because they can develop rapidly causing abrupt changes to weather conditions. Severe thunderstorms can produce strong straight line winds over 60 mph, large hail, flooding rains, frequent lightning, and tornadoes. Southeast Michigan averages 30 to 40 thunderstorm days per year with the most deaths and injuries resulting from straight line winds.

The National Weather Service issues Severe Thunderstorms Watches and Warnings so that the public can seek shelter before storms arrive. **Watches** will be issued up to 6 hours before storms are expected while **warnings** will be issued for a 10-60 minute window when strong storms are imminent in your community. A Severe Thunderstorm Warning is issued for hail larger than one inch in diameter or winds greater than 58 mph. When a severe thunderstorm warning is in effect, people should seek shelter in a sturdy building away from windows. It is important to continue monitoring weather conditions even after a warning has been issued for upgrades to a **Tornado Warning**.



Michigan averages **16 tornadoes** a year with the greatest number of tornadoes occurring during the warm months from April-September. Tornadoes are possible during any hour of the day or night and are even possible during the winter months under rare conditions. A **Tornado Warning** is issued when the Doppler radar indicates that rotation in a thunderstorm is descending towards the ground or when a reliable tornado report is received. People need to take action immediately when a tornado warning is issued

for their community as they may only have minutes to respond before the tornado strikes. It is especially important to create and practice your tornado safety plan before severe storms develop. Michigan residents are encouraged to practice tornado drills at home, work, and schools every spring during Severe Weather Awareness week. Everyone knows the safest place to be during a tornado is below ground in a basement. Please reference the instructions on the back for where to seek shelter if a basement is not available.

Where to seek shelter from a Tornado?

Always seek shelter in a basement. If no basement is available then:

1. Seek shelter on the lowest level of the building (in a designated tornado shelter if available).
2. Avoid windows and exterior walls.
3. Get into a small interior room such as a bathroom or closet.
4. Get under something sturdy like a desk or stairwell.
5. Use pillows, blankets, or clothing to shelter yourself from debris.

If you are driving or in a mobile home:

1. Get into a sturdy building as quickly as possible.
2. Do not attempt to out run a tornado.

If you **can not** make it to a sturdy building and encounter flying debris while driving, as a last resort your options are:

1. Stay in the car with the seat belt on. Put your head down below the windows, covering with your hands and a blanket if possible.
2. If you can safely get noticeably lower than the level of the roadway, exit your car and lie in that area, covering your head with your hands.



**WHEN
THUNDER
ROARS,
GO
INDOORS!**



Lightning Safety

- It is never safe to be outdoors during thunderstorms.
- It does not have to be raining to get struck by lightning.
- Avoid showering
- Do not use telephones with cords
- Picnic shelters do not offer protection from thunderstorms.
- Hard topped vehicles do offer protection from non-severe thunderstorms.

Flooding Safety

Flooding is responsible for the most fatalities of any weather related hazard nationwide. Rushing water can be extremely powerful and can wash out roads. A car may float in only 6-12 inches of water, causing a motorist to lose control of their vehicle. Aside from being dangerous, this can also cause significant damage to your engine. The National Weather Service recommends never driving into water covered roads. It is always better to find another route and be safe.



Winter Weather

Many hazards threaten Michigan residents during the winter months including strong winds, heavy snow, dangerous wind chills, extreme cold, and even ice jams on local rivers. The

National Weather Service issues Watches, Warnings, and Advisories to alert the public to the threat of dangerous conditions.



Watches will be issued 24-48 hours before the hazardous weather arrives. The Watch gives people time to make preparations and alter plans before the hazard occurs.

Advisories will be issued 12-24 hours in advance for winter weather, wind chills, and strong winds. A winter weather advisory is generally issued when winter weather has an impact on travel.

Warnings will be issued 12-24 hour in advance and indicate a greater threat than an advisory. Travel is strongly discouraged when Winter Storm, Ice Storm, or Blizzard Warnings are in effect.

Extreme Cold is one of the most under-rated threats that Michigan residents face every year. Children and the elderly are the most susceptible to cold related illnesses and should be especially careful when temperatures drop.



NOAA Weather Radio ALL Hazards

is a 24-hour continuous broadcast of weather information that can be heard on specially designed receivers, available to the public. During rapidly changing conditions, tune to the NOAA Weather Radio All Hazards for the latest forecasts and warnings. These radios may be programmed to sound an alarm when a warning is issued for the county you live in. Through partnerships with local governments, these radios will also alert the public to non-weather related emergencies such as 911 telephone outages, blackouts, or hazardous material releases. These radios are manufactured



by several different companies and are sold at most electronics stores.

Websites

www.weather.gov/dtx—Local Detroit/Pontiac NWS Office

www.spc.noaa.gov—Storm Prediction Center

www.noaa.gov—National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)

www.hpc.ncep.noaa.gov—Hydrometeorological Prediction Center

www.weather.gov/safety.php—National Weather Service Safety Education Page

www.lightningsafety.noaa.gov—Lightning Safety Awareness Week

www.floodsafety.noaa.gov—Flood Safety Awareness Week

www.ready.gov—FEMA emergency preparedness page

Are you *Ready?*

Prepare. Plan. Stay Informed.

Visit www.Ready.gov to find out how you can prepare for different weather and non-weather related emergencies.

There are 3 easy steps to follow!

- 1) **Get a Kit**
- 2) **Make a Plan**
- 3) **Be Informed**