

PRESS RELEASE

To:

What: Feb: 19-25 Severe Weather Awareness Week in Texas

Where: West Central Texas

Contact: Hector Guerrero at 325-944-0526 ext.223 or 325-656-6645 cell
hector.guerrero@noaa.gov

*Governor Rick Perry has proclaimed February 19th through the 25th
As Severe Weather Awareness Week in Texas*
<http://www.txdps.state.tx.us/dem/ThreatAwareness/govProclamation.pdf>

...Can You Receive a Tornado Warning...

Each year some Texans are surprised by tornadoes or severe thunderstorms. It is vitally important to have more than one way to receive NWS warnings. You can receive NWS warnings from devices such as your cell phone, smart phone, PC, radio, television and NOAA Weather Radio All Hazards. Some communities, universities and private companies are capable of texting or e-mailing NWS warnings to your cell phones or telephones. You can search the internet for these private companies and/or you may contact your university and/or local Emergency Management Office to see if they offer these services in your area.

NOAA All Hazards Radio functions like a smoke detector and warns you anywhere and anytime. This device will automatically alert you of tornadoes, flash floods and severe thunderstorms whether you are asleep or away from your favorite radio station, or TV station, or internet site. You can buy a weather radio at most businesses that sell electronic devices.

TORNADO DRILL ENCOURAGED (See Below)

The National Weather Service (NWS) in San Angelo encourages all residents and schools across West Central Texas to practice their tornado warning drill on Thursday, February 23rd at 9:30 AM. The NWS in San Angelo will transmit a **Special Message** through the Emergency Alert System (EAS) on Thursday February 23rd at 930 AM. Because of the test format of this message, it may or may not activate certain NOAA Weather Radios.

HELPFUL SEVERE WEATHER SAFETY LINKS and PSAs

Feel free to use any of the information contained on the following websites

www.srh.noaa.gov www.flash.org

<http://www.nws.noaa.gov/om/severeweather/resources/ttl6-10.pdf>

www.srh.noaa.gov/tadd www.redcross.org <http://www.txdps.state.tx.us/dem/index.htm>

Please help us prepare our fellow citizens for impacts associated with severe weather.

Please feel free to contact Hector Guerrero at 325-944-0526 ext.223 to set up an interview for your Newspaper, Radio or TV show. Your participation is extremely appreciated.

Hector Guerrero
Warning and Coordination Meteorologist

Steve Lyons
Meteorologist in Charge



Two Safety Rules that Could Save Your Life

Safety rule number 1- Be sure you can receive warnings from the National Weather Service.

Don't just depend on sirens. Have more than one way to receive your warnings like your cell phone or weather radio.

Sirens are used to warn those who are outdoors, and may not be loud enough to awaken you in the middle of the night. NOAA Weather Radio is like a smoke detector that can warn you anytime, both indoors or outdoors. This radio will produce a loud sound when a tornado warning is issued by the National Weather Service for your area.

Safety rule number 2- Know what to do.

The safest place to survive violent, killer tornadoes is in an approved underground storm shelter or in an above ground storm shelter.

The next safest place is on the lowest floor of your home, school or business in an interior room like a closet, hallway, or bathroom. Stay low to the ground and cover yourself with blankets, pillows, and/or mattresses.

If a tornado approaches and you live in a mobile home, abandon it for a more substantial shelter. If nothing is available, lie flat in a nearby ditch covering your head and neck.

Tornadic storms can also produce flash flooding. Watch out when you come to a flooded low water crossing. Always Turn Around, Don't Drown!

In 2007, about 45 Texans drowned when they tried to walk or drive into flooded areas.

When severe weather threatens West Central Texas, your National Weather Service closely coordinates with local emergency managers, volunteer fire fighters, law enforcement officials, SKYWARN storm spotters, storm chasers, and the media to help keep you safe. But you can be your best source for protection when you get a warning from the National Weather Service if you are "weather ready."

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact your nearest local emergency manager or you can call us the National Weather Service at 944-9445.

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS

RECEIVING WARNINGS ON YOUR CELL PHONE: 20 SECONDS

SOME COMMUNITIES, UNIVERSITIES, AND PRIVATE COMPANIES CAN TEXT OR E-MAIL LIFE SAVING NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE WARNINGS TO YOUR CELL PHONE OR TELEPHONE WHEN YOU NEED IT THE MOST. TO FIND THE PRIVATE COMPANIES THAT OFFER THIS SERVICE, YOU MAY INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING PHRASE OR SOMETHING SIMILAR IN YOUR FAVORITE INTERNET SEARCH ENGINE: "FREE TEXT MESSAGING WEATHER ALERTS." PLEASE CONTACT YOUR UNIVERSITY OR LOCAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT OFFICE TO SEE IF THEY OFFER THIS SERVICE IN YOUR AREA.

TORNADO ALLEY: 20 SECONDS http://www.txdps.state.tx.us/dem/pages/weather_aware_severe.htm

MORE TORNADOES STRIKE TEXAS THAN ANY OTHER STATE. IT'S IMPORTANT TO KNOW WHAT TO DO WHEN WARNINGS ARE ISSUED. IF YOU'RE AT HOME, GO TO YOUR STORM SHELTER OR BASEMENT. IF NEITHER IS AVAILABLE, GO TO THE LOWEST FLOOR AND SEEK A WINDOWLESS ROOM IN THE CENTER OF YOUR HOUSE LIKE A BATHROOM OR CLOSET. PROTECT YOUR HEAD WITH A PILLOW. IF YOU LIVE IN A MOBILE HOME, GO OUTSIDE AND LIE DOWN IN A DITCH OR LOW SPOT. COVER YOUR HEAD WITH YOUR ARMS.

FLASH FLOOD SAFETY: 15 SECONDS www.floodsafety.noaa.gov

ALWAYS TURN AROUND DON'T DROWN (R) WHEN YOU ENCOUNTER A FLOODED LOW WATER CROSSING WHETHER ON FOOT OR IN A VEHICLE. MANY PEOPLE DROWN AT NIGHT WHEN IT IS VERY DIFFICULT TO SEE A FLOODED LOW WATER CROSSING. FLASH FLOOD RELATED DEATHS ARE THE NUMBER ONE STORM RELATED KILLER IN TEXAS AND ACROSS THE NATION.

LIGHTNING SAFETY: 15 SECONDS www.lightningsafety.noaa.gov

WATCH THE CLOUDS AND BE PREPARED TO TAKE SHELTER BEFORE YOU HEAR THUNDER OR SEE LIGHTNING. IF YOU'RE CAUGHT OUTSIDE IN LIGHTNING, YOUR HOME AND YOUR CAR OFFER A SAFER SHELTER. STAY OUT OF THE BATHTUB, STAY AWAY FROM WINDOWS AND ELECTRICAL APPLIANCES. IF POSSIBLE, TURN OFF ALL APPLIANCES PRIOR TO THE STORM'S ARRIVAL. DON'T USE A CORDED TELEPHONE DURING A LIGHTNING EVENT UNLESS YOU HAVE AN EMERGENCY.

Your National Weather Service Office in San Angelo invites your school to participate in our 13th annual

Tornado Drill for Schools ***On Thursday, February 23rd at 9:30 A.M.***

February 19 – 25 is **Texas Severe Weather Awareness Week**. Severe weather may strike with only a few minutes of advance warning. Do you have more than one way to receive a warning including your cell phone?

At approximately 9:30 a.m., on Thursday, February 23rd, the National Weather Service in San Angelo encourages all schools to practice their tornado drills. We will transmit a special message about the drill through NOAA All Hazards Radio. Some of your local Radio and TV Stations, and Emergency Management offices may also carry this message.

We will transmit the message for the following counties: **Throckmorton, Haskell, Fisher, Jones, Shackelford, Nolan, Taylor, Callahan, Sterling, Coke, Runnels, Coleman, Brown, Irion, Tom Green, Concho, McCulloch, San Saba, Crockett, Schleicher, Menard, Sutton, Kimble, and Mason counties.**

For more information, please contact Hector Guerrero at hector.guerrero@noaa.gov or Dr. Steve Lyons at steve.lyons@noaa.gov or you can call us at 325-944-9445.

In 2004, a tornado drill was conducted on March 3rd by many schools. Then on the following day, March 4th, a severe line of thunderstorms with tornadoes struck west central Texas and even hit a school and produced substantial damage. This drill proved extremely valuable and prepared many schools for this extreme severe weather event.

TORNADO SAFETY RULES

If at home:

If you have a tornado [safe room](#) or engineered shelter go there immediately.

Go at once to a windowless, interior room; storm cellar; basement; or lowest level of the building.

If there is no basement, go to an inner hallway or a smaller inner room without windows, such as a bathroom or closet.

Get away from the windows.

Get under a piece of sturdy furniture such as a workbench or heavy table or desk and hold on to it.

Use arms to protect your head and neck.

If in a mobile home, get out and find shelter elsewhere.

If at work or school:

Go to the area designated in your tornado plan. The most interior room, on the lowest floor without windows.

Avoid places with wide-span roofs such as auditoriums, cafeterias, large hallways, or shopping malls.

Get under a piece of sturdy furniture such as a workbench or heavy table or desk and hold on to it.

Get down low with your head against the wall and use your arms to protect head and neck.

If outdoors:

If you are caught outdoors, seek shelter in a basement, shelter or sturdy building.

If you cannot quickly walk to a shelter: Immediately get into a vehicle, buckle your seat belt and try to drive to the closest sturdy shelter.

If in a car:

If flying debris occurs while you are driving, pull over and park. Now you have the following options as a last resort:

Stay in your vehicle with the seat belt on. Put your head down below the windows, covering with your hands and a blanket if possible.

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. Be aware of the potential for flooding.

Your choice should be driven by your specific circumstances