



Stakeholder Toolkit

2023 Severe Weather Awareness

Severe Weather Awareness

The Federal Emergency Management Agency ([FEMA](#)) and the National Weather Service ([NWS](#)) will be highlighting the importance of preparing for severe weather during the spring.

Severe weather can happen during any season and impact any part of our country. Spring is a time of transition, when late-season snowstorms can impact the East Coast and the Northern Plains, thunderstorms rip across the South and Midwest, rivers overflow their banks and heat waves begin in the Southwest. Don't let this dangerous season catch you unaware. Get ready for spring with just a few simple steps: ***Know Your Risk, Take Action and Be an Example.***

In addition to asking Americans to learn their risks and take action to prepare through their own outreach channels, FEMA Region 7 is encouraging everyone to get the word out and help the Whole Community prepare for severe weather.

This toolkit is designed to provide you and your organization easy to use tools to promote this campaign and help your stakeholders be better prepared for disasters.

Should you have any questions on this document, please contact Kristiana Sanford at Kristiana.Sanford@fema.dhs.gov.

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Talking Points

National Severe Weather Awareness

Key Message

- **Know Your Risk:** Droughts, floods, tornadoes, thunderstorm winds, hail, lightning, heat, wildfires, snowstorms – severe weather impacts every part of the country. The first step to becoming weather-ready is to understand the type of hazardous weather that effect where you live and work, and how the weather could impact you and your loved ones.
- **Take Action:** Make an evacuation plan, build an emergency kit or update your existing kit and keep important papers and valuables in a safe place, and get involved in helping others prepare. You can begin by visiting [Ready.gov](https://www.ready.gov).
- **Be an example where you live:** Be a helpful influence on your community by sharing your weather preparedness story. Be a Force of Nature by letting your friends and family know what you did to become weather-ready and the steps they can take to do the same.

Know Your Risk

- In 2022, there were [18 weather/climate disaster events](#) with losses exceeding \$1 billion each to affect the United States. These events included 1 drought event, 1 flooding event, 11 severe storm events, 3 tropical cyclone events, 1 wildfire event, and 1 winter storm event. Overall, these events resulted in the deaths of 474 people and had significant economic effects on the areas impacted. The 1980–2022 annual average is 7.9 events (CPI-adjusted); the annual average for the most recent 5 years (2018–2022) is 17.8 events (CPI-adjusted).
- What you can do:
 - Visit [Ready.gov/be-informed](https://www.ready.gov/be-informed) to learn about the hazards that may impact your area.
 - Bookmark [weather.gov](https://www.weather.gov) to get the latest forecast information.
 - Follow [@FEMARegion7](#) on Twitter.
 - Follow @FEMA on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).
 - Follow the National Weather Service on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).
 - Read the [State of the Climate](#) reports to discover historical trends.

Take Action

- Make sure that you and your loved ones are prepared for severe weather. This includes creating a disaster supplies kit and making sure you can receive emergency messages.

- Here is what you can do;
 - Obtain a [NOAA Weather Radio](#).
 - Download the FEMA smartphone app.
 - Learn about [Wireless Emergency Alerts](#).
 - Think ahead of the weather and have a plan for traveling and staying in touch during emergencies
 - Plan out with your loved ones what to do in case of an evacuation.
 - It is essential to go over how everyone can communicate during emergencies.
 - Build an Emergency Kit and keep your supplies up-to-date.
 - An emergency supply kit is simply a collection of basic items your household may need in the event of an emergency.
 - Visit [ready.gov/kit](#) for a basic list of suggested items.
 - Try to assemble your kit well in advance of an emergency and make sure you have a way to take supplies with you easily.
 - You may have to evacuate at a moment's notice and take essentials with you. Once a disaster hits, you will not have time to shop or search for supplies.

Be an Example

- [Be a Force of Nature](#) and inspire others.
- Be a positive influence on your community by sharing your preparedness story.
- Building a nation of preparedness requires the action of all of us. Each and every person across the country has the potential to be an example and be ready.
- Studies show that individuals need to receive messages a number of ways before taking appropriate action.
- Many people are more likely to act when the messages they receive are from a trusted source - family, friends, or community leader.
- Share the actions you've taken to be prepared with your family and friends by posting your story on your social media site.
- Tweet that you're prepared with the hashtag **#MidwestReady**, **#RedCross**, and **#NWS**
- Have an emergency plan and know what to do before a disaster strikes. Post your plan in your home or business where individuals can see it.
- Find out from local emergency management how you can be notified for each kind of disaster and sign up for additional alerts through social media and local news.
- Using [Ready.gov](#) materials, you can lead a preparedness discussion, drill, or exercise in your home or workplace. Help others get informed and take action with you.

Quick Tips to Prepare

- Pick up some canned goods when your store has a sale, they'll last a long time and ensure you'll have something to eat. Remember: "Two is one and one is none".
- Clean empty two-liter soda bottles and fill them with water or use bottled water.
- If it's been 6 months since you got fresh water for your kit, rotate fresh water in.
- Write the date you bought items for your kit on them, it'll help you keep everything fresh.
- Around the dinner table, talk to your loved ones about where you would meet in the event of different weather emergencies, both within and outside of your immediate neighborhood. Use the [Family Emergency Plan](#) to decide these locations before a disaster.
- Identify some pet-friendly hotels in case you have to evacuate.
- Program "In Case of Emergency" contacts into your phone and label them ICE in front of their name.
- Teach friends and family members to text on their cellphones. Text messages can often get through when phone calls cannot.
- Make copies of important documents for your emergency kit (*medications, medical info, proof of address, passports, birth certificates, insurance policies, etc.*). Consider putting them on a flash drive as well.
- Get an extra set of house and car keys made for your emergency kit.
- Download the [FEMA smartphone app](#).
- Teach everyone how to turn off the utilities in your house (electricity, gas, water, etc.) so they can do so in case of an emergency.
- Make a checklist of everything that needs to be done in a disaster. Divide tasks up amongst your family. That way everyone has a responsibility, and nothing gets missed.
- Sign up to receive [text messages](#) from FEMA and your local response officials.
- If you have a car, keep a full tank of gas in it if an evacuation seems likely. Keep a half tank of gas in it at all times in case of an unexpected need to evacuate. Gas stations may be closed during emergencies and unable to pump gas during power outages. Plan to take one car per family to reduce congestion and delay.
- Become familiar with alternate routes and other means of transportation out of your area. Choose several destinations in different directions so you have options in an emergency.
- Leave early enough to avoid being trapped by severe weather.
- Follow recommended evacuation routes. Do not take shortcuts; they may be blocked.
- Be alert for road hazards such as washed-out roads or bridges and downed power lines. Do not drive into flooded areas.
- If you do not have a car, plan how you will leave if you have to. Make arrangements with family or friends.

Make a Plan

- Background
 - It is important to plan in advance: how you will get to a safe place; how you will contact family and friends; how you will get back together; and what you will do in different situations.
 - Winging it is not an emergency plan. Sit down with your loved ones and talk through what to do in a disaster.
 - Discuss important factors like who to call, where to meet, and what to pack.
- Emergency Plan
 - Identify three places to meet family and friends in the event of an emergency. One in your neighborhood, one in your town, and one out of town.
 - Learn how you will get to your out of town location if needed; determine the route you will take to leave.
 - Write down information about important locations and phone numbers like workplaces, schools, daycares, houses of worship, etc.
 - Make sure you take into account everyone's needs, such as any medical concerns, communications, etc.
 - Know how you will learn important information after a disaster (radio, warning sirens, reverse 911, etc.)
 - Share contact information with everyone (friends, family, and out of town contacts).

Press Release Template

<ORGANIZATION> is Encouraging Everyone to “Be a Force of Nature”
<Date>

Take the Next Step Severe Weather Awareness

<CITY, St.> – **<INSERT ORGANIZATION>** is proud to join and promote the campaign to spread the word and encourage **<employees or residents>** and the rest of the community to [Be a Force of Nature](#) by knowing your risk, taking action, and being an example where you live. **<INSERT ORGANIZATION>** is **<INSERT EVENT INFORMATION HERE>** or **<committed to being a leader for emergency preparedness>**.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency ([FEMA](#)) and The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration ([NOAA](#)) are teaming up again to highlight the importance of preparing for severe weather before it strikes. This spring, take time to learn what hazards may impact you, how to take action by making a kit and having a plan, and how you can become an example where you live by sharing your actions with others, such as friends, neighbors and co-workers.

Taking preparedness actions can save lives and protect property anywhere - at home, in schools, in your neighborhood, and in the workplace. In 2022, there were [many weather and climate disaster events](#) each with losses exceeding \$1 billion. Nationally, these events included 1 drought event, 11 severe storms, 3 tropical cyclone events, one wildfire event, and one winter storm event. Overall, these resulted in the deaths of several individuals and had significant economic effects.

Know your risk: Learn what hazards pose a risk where you live and work and their potential impact on you, your loved ones, and your community. Once you understand your risk, you are better equipped to take preparations. You can learn more about hazards in your area by talking to local officials or going to [Ready.gov/Be-Informed](#). The National Weather Service has a great website explaining the basics of severe weather at [Weather-Ready Nation](#) and [eye-opening statistics](#).

Take action: Develop an [emergency plan](#) and practice how and where you will evacuate if instructed by your emergency management officials. Post your plan in your home where visitors can see it.

More information can be found at **<INSERT ORGANIZATION WEBSITE or <http://www.weather.gov/wrn/force>>**. Information on the different types of hazards is available at [Ready.gov](#) or the Spanish-language web site [Listo.gov](#).

###

Online Resources

FEMA, Ready, and NOAA recommend using social media tools as a way to promote “[Be A Force of Nature!](#)” You can promote the campaign and general preparedness through your own channels, or by promoting messages posted by the FEMA, Ready and NOAA accounts.

We have included some sample messages below that you can post on your own social media accounts to engage your friends/followers as part of the [Be a Force of Nature](#) campaign. More information and ideas on how to take action and be an example can be found on FEMA’s official [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) or [Instagram](#) accounts, Ready’s official [Facebook](#) or [Twitter](#) accounts, NOAA’s official [Facebook](#) or [Twitter](#), National Weather Service’s official [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) account or FEMA Region 7’s [Twitter](#) account.

Logo and Poster

Download the *Be a Force of Nature* graphic for your website

- Use this square graphic to promote Severe Weather Preparedness
- http://www.nws.noaa.gov/com/weatherreadynation/files/force_of-Nature_icon.jpg



NOAA’s National Weather Service (NWS) National Seasonal Safety Campaign Badge for Spring Weather Safety. <https://www.weather.gov/wrn/spring-safety>

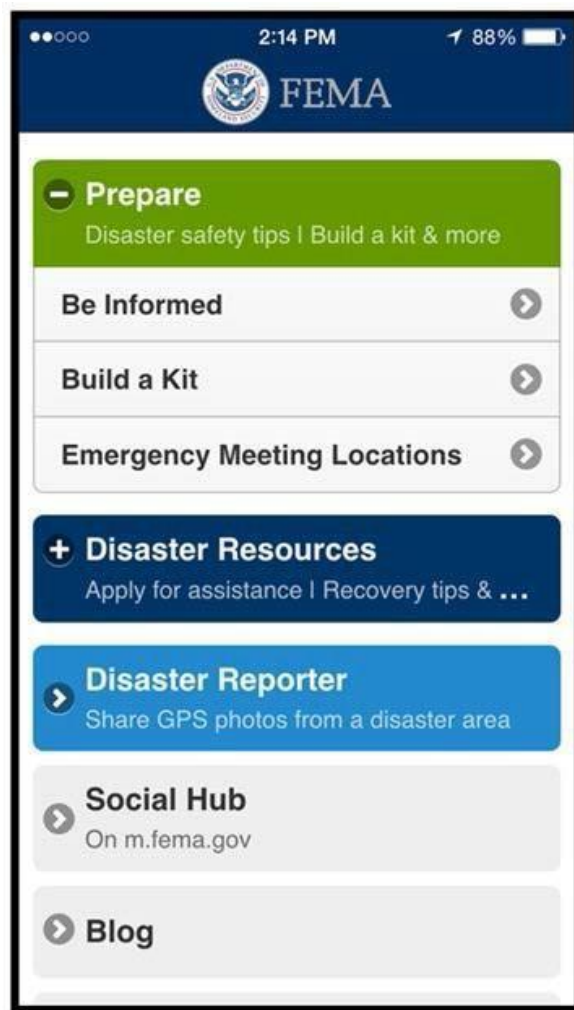


Download Hazard Specific Posters and Presentational Tools

- [Spring Weather Safety Presentation](#)
- [Tornado Promotional Materials](#)
- [Flood Promotional Materials](#)
- [Earthquake Promotional Materials](#)

FEMA App (*smartphone app for mobile devices*)

The FEMA App contains disaster safety tips, interactive lists for storing your emergency kit, emergency meeting location information, and other disaster-specific information. The app is free to download through your smart phone provider's app store on [Android](#), [Apple](#), and [Blackberry](#) devices.



Accurate weather information at your fingertips on your mobile device!

<http://mobile.weather.gov/#typeLocation>

Social Media

FEMA, NOAA, and FEMA Region 7 will have daily messages on their Facebook and Twitter accounts throughout the spring.

You may follow and echo the messaging from these accounts.

- FEMA Region 7
 - [Twitter](#)
- FEMA HQ
 - [Facebook](#)
 - [Twitter](#)
- Ready
 - [Facebook](#)
 - [Twitter](#)
- NOAA
 - [Facebook](#)
 - [Twitter](#)
- NWS
 - [Facebook](#)
 - [Twitter](#)

Preparedness Messaging

These messages are designed to be posted at any point during the spring. Feel free to adapt the messages to suit your needs.

Get Tech Ready

- Download the FEMA app to get real-time alerts, safety tips, and locate open shelters.
- Sign up to receive text or email alerts about emergencies from your local Office of Emergency Management.
- Snap photos of important documents and save them online or in a secure place you can access during an emergency.
- Set up group text lists so you can communicate with friends and family at the same time during emergencies.
- Download money saving apps to help you save for a rainy day.
- Have external power sources available to charge phones and other devices in case of a power outage. #ResolveToBeReady #PrepTips

Preparedness Tips

- Include cash in your emergency supply kit. During an extended power outage, ATMs and credit card machines may not work.
- Check-in with neighbors to see how you can help each other out before and after a storm.
- Pick an out-of-town person for everyone to contact during an emergency.
- Preparing your family for an emergency is as simple as having a conversation over dinner. Make a plan tonight.

- As part of your family's emergency supply kit, include games and toys to keep children entertained.
- Get prepared by having an emergency supply kit already stored. www.ready.gov/kit #ResolveToBeReady
- Snap pictures of your property and make an inventory for insurance purposes.
- 30: The number of days it takes for flood insurance to begin. The time to buy is when it's dry.
- If you rely on public transportation, contact your local emergency management agency about evacuation procedures before a hurricane.
- Make a list of the things you would need or want to take with you if you had to leave your home quickly.
- Prepare your car for winter: keep your gas tank near full to help avoid ice in the tank and fuel lines.
- Make a plan to check on neighbors if extreme cold or winter weather knocks out your power.
- Learn how to shut off the utilities where you live, including water, electricity, and gas.
- #PrepTips: Take a first aid and CPR class. www.ready.gov/safety-skills #ResolveToBeReady
- Plan how you will leave and where you will go if you are advised to evacuate. Don't forget to include pets in your plans! www.ready.gov/evacuation #ResolveToBeReady
- Assemble supplies for a "go-bag" you can carry if you need to evacuate www.ready.gov/evacuation #ResolveToBeReady #PrepTips
- Make a portable emergency kit for your car www.ready.gov/car #ResolveToBeReady
- Save. Save. Save. Your emergency savings can help you get life saving items like food, shelter, and water in an emergency. Saving tips: www.ready.gov/financial-preparedness #FinancialFuture

Planning with Pets

- Take a current photo of you and your pet together in case you get separated during a disaster. www.ready.gov/pets #ResolveToBeReady #PetPreparedness
- Search online today for local pet-friendly evacuation locations in case you need to evacuate.
- Update your pet's microchip registration info so you can be contacted if your pet gets lost in a disaster. www.ready.gov/pets #ResolveToBeReady #PetPreparedness
- Put your name and contact information on your pet's ID tag in case you're separated in an emergency. www.ready.gov/pets #ResolveToBeReady #PetPreparedness
- Remember to include your pets in your family's emergency plans.

Twitter Microburst

You can help The National Weather Service (NWS), The American Red Cross, and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Region 7 by promoting Severe Weather Week (SWXW) on Social Media via a Microburst. A Microburst is a localized version of a Thunderclap, where all participants of SWXW will use the same identifying hashtag on multiple social media accounts and platforms, creating an impact on their immediate social media environment.

We're planning on holding the Microburst on **March 28, 2023 at 10:00am CDT** to introduce SWXW across FEMA Region 7's four-state region; Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, and Nebraska. Please tweet/post (or have someone in your organization tweet/post) a message **using the hashtags; #MidwestReady, #NWS, #RedCross** at 10:00am, using your organization's official Social Media accounts. This will give SWXW the social media presence it deserves and drive attention to the importance of being prepared.

Using #MidwestReady as a search, you'll be able to find others tweeting/posting similar messages. If everyone retweets/reposts each other's' messages, the Microburst's affects will grow even larger. The idea is to generate a conversation between all of our participating organizations for a few minutes at the same time on **March 28, 2023 at 10:00am CDT**.

Feel free to use the hashtags in other tweets throughout the month of March. **We will continue using these hashtags during the entire month of March, culminating on March 31, 2023;** using the hashtags throughout that entire time as well as the specified date and time will go a long way in increasing cross-recognition of all severe weather events, social media, and programs.

Specific Messages

Flood

- Learn what to do before, during & after a flood by visiting: ready.gov/floods #SevereWxPrep
- Learn your flood risk by entering your address in the Flood Smart widget: <https://msc.fema.gov/portal/search> #SevereWxPrep
- If you approach a flooded road, path, or walkway follow this rule: Turn Around, Don't Drown®! #SevereWxPrep
- "When roads are flooded, Turn Around, Don't Drown®! It may save your life!" #SevereWxPrep
- Promote "Turn Around, Don't Drown®!" in your community to save lives before a #flood #SevereWxPrep
- If you're already on "high ground" during a flood, stay where you are. Be prepared by having your supplies already stored. #SevereWxPrep
- Gather & store supplies for all your common locations in case you need to stay in place during a flood. #SevereWxPrep
- Get your "go bag" ready today in case you need to leave quickly due to a flood. For supply info visit: <https://www.ready.gov/kit> #SevereWxPrep
- Snap some pictures of your property & do an inventory. This will be handy if flood waters damage your property. #SevereWxPrep
- Before a flood: reduce potential property damage by elevating utilities & installing sewer backflow valves. #SevereWxPrep

- In areas with repetitive flooding, consider elevating the building. #SevereWxPrep
- Learn your evacuation routes today in case you're directed to leave by local authorities due to a flood. #SevereWxPrep
- Learn what to do before, during & after a flood in this How to Prepare for a Flood guide: <https://www.ready.gov/floods> #SevereWxPrep
- Whether it's flash, river or coastal flooding, every community is subject to floods. Get prepared: <https://www.ready.gov/floods> #SevereWxPrep
- 30: The number of days it takes for flood insurance to begin. Don't wait until it's too late! <https://www.floodsmart.gov/> #SevereWxPrep

Tornado

- You may not always receive an official tornado alert so know the warning signs. Find them here: <https://www.ready.gov/tornadoes> #SevereWxPrep
- Funnel cloud, loud roar, & change in sky color are a few tornado warning signs. Learn others: <https://www.ready.gov/tornadoes> #SevereWxPrep
- Lightning and hail are common in tornado weather! Learn what else to expect. <https://www.ready.gov/tornadoes> #SevereWxPrep
- Best protective location in a tornado is a FEMA safe room or storm shelter built to International Code Council 500 Standards. #SevereWxPrep
- Safe rooms & storm shelters can save lives. Consider installing a safe room built to FEMA standards. <https://www.ready.gov/tornadoes> #SevereWxPrep
- No safe room or storm shelter? Get to a sturdy building w/a small, interior, windowless room, lowest level, basement best. #SevereWxPrep
- #Tornado Tip: A protective location in a sturdy building, is a small internal room w/out windows on lowest level or below ground. #SevereWxPrep
- Practice moving quickly to a protective location in the places where you spend a lot of time. #SevereWxPrep
- Tornadoes cause high winds which can knock out power. Be prepared by gathering supplies for each household member. #SevereWxPrep
- Tornado survivors say having a plan on where to take cover saved their life. Where will you take cover? <https://www.ready.gov/tornadoes> #SevereWxPrep
- Know where you would go to protect yourself in a #tornado at every place you spend a lot of time. #SevereWxPrep
- Know where to go if a Tornado Watch escalates to a Tornado Warning. Safe rooms and storm shelters save lives. #SevereWxPrep
- Don't get it twisted! Tornadoes can occur with almost no warning! Get prepared now: <https://www.ready.gov/tornadoes> #SevereWxPrep
- Live in a tornado-prone area? Practice going to your protective location often. <https://www.ready.gov/tornadoes> #SevereWxPrep #PrepareAthon
- Take time now to safeguard critical documents and take pictures or videos of your belongings. <https://www.ready.gov/financial-preparedness> #SevereWxPrep

Know Your Risk

- Know #SevereWxPrep terms. Watches=severe weather is possible.
- Know #SevereWxPrep terms. Warnings=severe conditions have begun or will begin soon.
- Timely info on weather conditions can make a big difference. Learn about alerts & warnings: <https://www.ready.gov/alerts> #SevereWxPrep

- Get alerts and warnings for impending weather events with a @NOAA Weather Radio. Learn more: [nws.noaa.gov/nwr/](https://www.noaa.gov/nwr/) #SevereWxPrep
- Find out about local alerts and warnings by contacting your local emergency management or visiting their website. #SevereWxPrep
- Learn what alerts are available in your area, by doing an Internet search w/ your town, city or county name & the word alerts. #SevereWxPrep

Take Action

- Get a jump start on what to do before a #Tornado #Wildfire or #Flood by following @Readygov #SevereWxPrep
- Severe weather can strike any time of the year. Are you prepared? Follow @Readygov for updates. #SevereWxPrep
- During severe weather Wireless #EmergencyAlerts can save your life. Watch how: http://youtu.be/wDpcGypv2_U #SevereWxPrep
- Wireless Emergency Alerts are automatic texts sent to you in an emergency; no sign-up required: <https://www.ready.gov/alerts> #SevereWxPrep
- Sign-up for @Twitter Alerts from @FEMA for critical information in real-time: <https://twitter.com/fema/alerts> #SevereWxPrep
- Talk with your kids about #SevereWxPrep. Know the facts: <https://www.ready.gov/kids>
- Make a plan to connect during severe weather by text, e-mail, social media & cell. #SevereWxPrep
- #SevereWxPrep tips: Only travel if necessary, keep phones charged, check on neighbors, & bring pets indoors.
- Pack an emergency kit for each person and pet traveling in your car in case evacuations are ordered: [ready.gov/car](https://www.ready.gov/car) #SevereWxPrep
- Drills aren't just for your toolbox. Practice emergency drills with your family regularly. #SevereWxPrep
- Help your friends get ready for severe weather www.ready.gov/severe-weather #SevereWxPrep
- Make sure your business has a #SevereWxPrep plan. Tips: www.ready.gov/business

Severe Weather Awareness Tools:

NOAA:

- [Be a Force of Nature](#)
- [National Seasonal Safety Campaign](#)
 - **Articles**
 - [Lightning Myths](#)
 - [Tornado Alerts](#)
 - **Presentation**
 - [Severe Weather Preparedness](#)
 - **Social Media Plans**
 - [Flood Safety](#)
 - [Lightning Safety](#)
 - [Tornado Safety](#)
 - [Spring Break \(Beach and Sun Hazards\)](#)

- **Weather Safety Web Sites**
 - [Severe Weather](#)
 - [Floods](#)
 - [Lightning](#)
 - [Heat](#)
 - [Wildfires](#)

Ready:

- [Ready.gov/Severe-Weather](https://www.ready.gov/severe-weather)

What is severe weather? (Click for more information on each hazard)

- [Tornadoes](#)
- [Thunderstorms & Lightning](#)
- [Floods](#)