



MISSISSIPPI EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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SEVERE WEATHER AWARENESS WEEK SET FOR FEB. 22 - 26

PEARL – Governor Haley Barbour declared Feb. 22- 26 Severe Weather Awareness Week in Mississippi.

The National Weather Service will issue a statewide **test** tornado warning on NOAA weather radios only on the morning of Feb. 24. Schools, government agencies and businesses throughout the state are encouraged to participate in the annual tornado drill.

“Education and preparation are the keys to staying safe during severe weather,” said MEMA Director Mike Womack. “That’s why we take time each year to promote severe weather awareness in our state. Taking a few minutes to create a disaster kit and plan will go a long way in keeping you, your family and friends safe when severe weather strikes.”

The most effective preparedness tool a citizen can own is a National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) weather radio, Womack said. National Weather Service offices throughout the country broadcast local weather information 24 hours a day. The radio sounds an alarm when local severe weather watches and warnings are issued. NOAA weather radios sell for approximately \$30 to \$70 at many local retailers. Warnings may also be received by using a receiver which gets warnings by using the Radio Broadcast Data System which is broadcast on the data subcarrier of FM radio stations. Mississippi has near complete coverage using this system. For more on how to get a RBDS receiver go to www.alertfm.com.

“While our typical peak for severe weather in Mississippi is usually in the spring our residents need to be prepared all year long,” said Jackson NWS Meteorologist in Charge Alan Gerard. “Having a reliable way of receiving weather warnings saves lives. Don’t place all your eggs in one basket, identify more than one way you can receive those weather alerts.”

The first step in being prepared for severe weather is to monitor local media for severe weather watches and warnings or monitor Web sites that provide weather information including that National Weather Service’s site at www.srh.noaa.gov.

Local weather information and alerts for central Mississippi counties are available at www.srh.noaa.gov/jan. Coastal counties can visit www.srh.noaa.gov/mob or www.srh.noaa.gov/lix and northern counties can visit www.srh.noaa.meg.

For more information, contact MEMA External Affairs at 866-920-MEMA (6362), or visit us online at www.msema.org.

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