

Weekly Safety Tip

SEVERE WEATHER PREPAREDNESS WEEK

The NOAA (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration) and FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) launched the very first National Severe Weather Preparedness Week this year, held April 22-28. These federal agencies have a joint web site at www.ready.gov/severe-weather with information that will help save lives by educating the public on what to do before, during, and after severe weather strikes. Last year (2011) there were more than 1,000 fatalities and 8,000 injuries caused by severe weather. While we can't control when or where severe weather will hit, we can prepare and arm ourselves with the knowledge of what to do before, during, and after a severe weather event.

Before: Keep an **Emergency Supply Kit** that includes non-perishable food, water, flashlight, radio and batteries. Create an **Emergency Plan** so that everyone knows what to do in an emergency. Know where the shelter areas are at home and at work. Know how to **Shut Off Utilities** such as power, gas, and water. Have a fire extinguisher handy, and be sure everyone knows how to use it.

During: Monitor **Weather Forecasts** and keep a lookout for darkening skies, flashes of light, and increasing wind. Close outside doors and windows, blinds, shades, and curtains. Heed evacuation announcements and warnings to take shelter, and stay in a sheltered area until danger has passed. If there is lightning, do not use wired telephones, touch appliances, or run water. Cell phones are safe to use. Listen to radio or television for weather updates.

After: Stay off the roads to allow passage for emergency responders and limit travel for only necessary trips. Help injured or trapped persons, and do not attempt to move anyone who is seriously injured unless they are in immediate danger of death or further injury. Stay away from downed utility wires and treat them all as live wires – report downed wires to authorities. Flood waters may be contaminated, so don't walk or wade into them if at all possible. Note that only six inches of fast moving water can knock a person off their feet and cause drowning. Look for damage and hazards created by the storm and leave the area if you smell gas or chemical fumes.

Click on the highlighted web links above and below for additional detailed information.

Tornadoes

Thunderstorms and Lightning

Floods

Hurricanes

