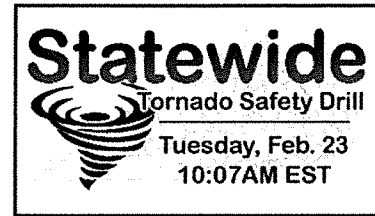


For Immediate Release

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SEVERE WEATHER AWARENESS WEEK FEB 22 – 28
STATEWIDE TORNADO SAFETY DRILL IS Feb23, 10:17 A.M. EST

FRANKFORT, Ky.(Feb.17, 2016)– Partnering with Kentucky Emergency Management and the National Weather Service, the McCreary County Emergency Management recognizes Feb 22 – 28, 2016is “Severe Weather Awareness Week in Kentucky.”

Rudy Young, Director of the McCreary County EMA, said, “Weather is always a threat in Kentucky: Already in 2016 Kentuckians have experienced historic snow falls, followed less than a week later of risks of severe storms and tornadoes. It is important to ensure your safety and the safety of your family to plan ahead and know what to do in the event severe weather or a tornado warning is issued for our community.”

As part of severe weather awareness activities, a statewide tornado drill is being conducted in conjunction with the proclamation.

At approximately 10:017 A.M. EST, Tuesday, Feb23,the National Weather Service (NWS),partnering with Kentucky Emergency Management (KYEM),the Kentucky Weather Preparedness Committee(KWPC) and Kentucky Broadcasters Association (KBA) will issue a tornado warning test message.

Outdoor warning sirens will sound across Kentucky communities; weather alert radios will activate; and television and radio station and mobile devices will broadcast the alert – allowing the public the opportunity to practice tornado safety measures.

The broadcast test message will emphasize this is only a test of the alert system.During the test alert, all Kentuckians, businesses, hospitals, nursing homes, educators and government agencies are encouraged to practice their tornado safety drill and update their emergency plan.

Severe weather preparedness begins with knowing the risks:

- Step 1. Understand the type of hazardous weather that can affect where you live and work, and how the weather could impact you and your family.
- Step 2. Check the weather forecast regularly. Get a NOAA Weather Radio and signup for localized alerts from emergency management officials.
- Step 3: Develop a personal emergency plan that considers all types of local hazards.

If you do not have a tornado plan in place, consider these guidelines:

- Designate a tornado shelter in an interior room on the lowest level of a building, away from windows.
- Basements are best, but, if there is no basement, choose an interior bathroom, closet or other enclosed space on the lowest level of a building.
- Tell everyone where the designated shelter is and post the location.

To conduct a tornado drill at home or work:

- Announce the start of the drill.
- Participants should act as though a tornado warning has been issued for the immediate area or a tornado has been sighted nearby. They should move as quickly as possible to the designated tornado shelter.
- Once people reach predestinated safe areas, they should crouch as low as possible to the floor, facing down, covering their heads with their hands.
- Once everyone has reached safe shelter, announce the mock tornado has passed and the drill is complete.
- After the drill, perform an assessment. Determine whether the shelter you chose was large enough for everyone, easy to get to and uncluttered.
- Help emergency managers and weather officials improve weather notifications and awareness campaigns by completing a short online survey, available at <http://kyem.ky.gov/preparedness/Pages/default.aspx>.

During severe weather, if you are caught outdoors and unable to seek indoor shelter, lie flat in a nearby ditch or depression and cover your head with your hands. Be aware of the potential for flooding.

Remember, outdoor sirens are not designed to warn indoor inhabitants, and tornadoes also strike during the night. If you are asleep or don't happen to have a television or radio turned on when a severe weather warning is issued; battery-backed weather alert radios are always on and ready to sound an alarm. This is the most effective way to monitor severe weather watches and warnings at any time of day or night.

Homes and businesses alike should have and should monitor weather alert radios, which automatically transmit NWS severe weather watches and warnings 24 hours a day.

KYEM is offering an online survey form that each participant is encouraged to complete and submit. The results will be used to help determine the effectiveness of the drill and to identify ways to improve readiness and alert notifications.

The survey, weather safety tips, helpful links and resources can be found on the KYEM website at: <http://kyem.ky.gov> where you can follow KYEMPIO on Twitter, like us on facebook and sign

up for mobile alert messages. Additional information is on the National Weather Service's website at <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/com/weatherreadynation/#.VrTV3DH2Z9N>.

Information on the McCreary County Emergency Management is available at <http://www.mccrearycounty.com/EmergencyManagement.html>

If inclement weather is in the forecast on Feb23, 2016, the Statewide Tornado Drill will be rescheduled.

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