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Missouri Severe Weather Awareness Week March 2nd - 6th

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Jefferson City, Missouri – Snow may be on the ground, but severe weather can be just around the corner. March 2nd – 6th is Missouri Severe Weather Awareness Week and the Statewide Tornado Drill will be performed.

The National Weather Service, the State Emergency Management Agency and local emergency managers are promoting Missouri Severe Weather Awareness Week, March 2-6, to help Missourians be prepared for dangerous tornadoes, severe storms, lightning and flooding.

Missouri's 41st annual Statewide Tornado Drill will be held on Tuesday, March 3 at 1:30 p.m. If severe weather is in the forecast for March 3, the drill will be moved to Thursday, March 5 at 1:30 p.m.

“As we’ve seen many times, severe storms can strike anywhere in Missouri at any time with devastating results,” State Emergency Management Agency Director Ron Walker said. “Everyone needs to understand that some simple advance planning and preparation can mean the difference between life and death. Planning should start with closely following weather updates anytime severe weather is in the forecast.”

On March 3, outdoor warning sirens and weather alert radios across the state will sound, signaling the beginning of the statewide tornado drill and indicating that Missourians should practice taking shelter.

The safest shelter location is the basement or an interior room in the lowest level of a building. Other safe locations for businesses and schools include interior stairways and tornado safe rooms.

The drill can be completed in as little as 15 minutes.

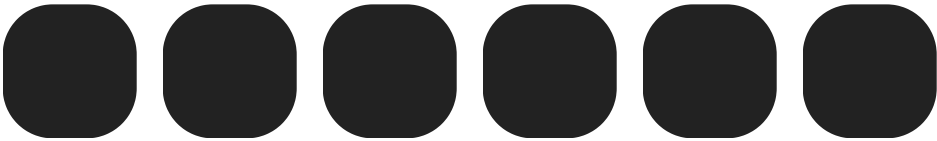
- Tornado watch means watch the sky. A tornado may form during a thunderstorm.
- Tornado warning means seek shelter immediately.
- The safest shelter location is an interior room without windows on the lowest floor.
- Do not seek shelter in a cafeteria, gymnasium or other large open room because the roof might collapse.
- Immediately leave a mobile home to seek shelter in a nearby building.
- Overpasses are not safe. Their under-the-girder-type construction can cause a dangerous wind tunnel effect.
- If you are driving, stop and take shelter in a nearby building.
- If you are driving in a rural area, drive away from the tornado to the closest building. If you cannot get away, seek shelter in a roadside ditch. Protect yourself from flying debris by covering your head with your arms, a coat or a blanket. Be prepared to move quickly in case the ditch fills with water.
- Never drive into standing water. It can take less than six inches of fast moving water to make a slow moving car float. Once floating, a vehicle can overturn and sink.

More information can be found on Missouri's [Stormaware.mo.gov](https://stormaware.mo.gov) website, which includes detailed videos and other useful resources about tornado sirens, flash flooding and weather alert radios. The site also includes links to free severe weather texting services that can alert people across Missouri to upcoming severe weather.

The National Weather Service provides safety tips and educational information about each day of Severe Weather Awareness Week on the St. Louis Forecast Office site: <http://www.crh.noaa.gov/lx/?n=severeweek>.

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