



NEWS RELEASE

MICHIGAN STATE POLICE

Statewide Tornado Drill Scheduled for April 19 *Severe Weather Awareness Week is April 16-22*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

April 17, 2017

LANSING, MICH. With Gov. Rick Snyder declaring Michigan's Severe Weather Awareness Week from April 16-22, the Michigan State Police, Emergency Management and Homeland Security Division (MSP/EMHSD) is calling upon Michigan residents to take action by participating in a voluntary statewide tornado drill at 1 p.m. EDT on Wednesday, April 19.

Businesses, organizations, families, and individuals are encouraged to engage in this statewide preparedness activity, but are not required to do so. Nearly all state of Michigan facilities will participate.

"Tornadoes can develop rapidly, with little or no warning," said Capt. Chris A. Kelenske, Deputy State Director of Emergency Management and Homeland Security and commander of the MSP/EMHSD. "Due to their unpredictable nature, we must be ready well in advance. We're asking residents and businesses to take a few extra steps during the week to ensure they're prepared."

While tornadoes can occur during any time of the year, they are especially common during the late spring and early summer months. As one of nature's most violent storms, they can devastate homes and property in just seconds.

The average lead time for tornadoes to develop is 10 to 15 minutes, which means citizens need to be ready to react quickly when a warning is issued.

To be ready for a tornado:

- Identify the lowest place to take cover during a tornado. If a basement does not exist, find an interior hallway away from windows, doors, and outside walls.
- Go under something sturdy—such as a workbench or stairwell—when taking shelter in the basement or designated spot.
- Conduct regular tornado drills. Make sure each household member knows where to go and what to do in the event of a tornado.

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- Stay tuned to commercial radio or television broadcasts for news on changing weather conditions or approaching storms.
- Know the difference: a Tornado Watch means conditions exist for a tornado to develop; a Tornado Warning means that a tornado has been sighted or indicated by weather radar.
- Be aware of the following signs that can indicate an approaching tornado:
 - Dark, often greenish sky
 - Large hail
 - A large, dark low-lying cloud
 - Loud roar, similar to a freight train
- Develop a 72-hour emergency supply kit with essential items such as a three-day supply of water and food, a NOAA Weather Radio, important family documents and items that satisfy unique family needs.

In the event of severe weather on April 19, the statewide tornado drill will be rescheduled for 1 p.m. EDT on Thursday, April 20.

About Severe Weather Awareness Week

Severe Weather Awareness Week is sponsored by the MSP/EMHSD and the Michigan Committee for Severe Weather Awareness (MCSWA) to educate the public about the dangers of tornadoes and other severe weather events. These precautions can be taken to save lives and protect families. The MCSWA was formed in 1991 to encourage Michigan residents to be prepared in the event of severe weather. To learn more about the committee, go to www.mcswa.com.

For more information about being safe before, during and after a tornado, go to follow the MSP/EMHSD on Twitter at [@MichEMHS](https://twitter.com/MichEMHS) or go to www.michigan.gov/miready. Emergency preparedness information is also available at www.ready.gov/tornadoes.

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The Michigan State Police, Emergency Management and Homeland Security Division is responsible for coordinating state and federal resources to assist local government in response and relief activities in the event of an emergency or disaster, as well as coordinating homeland security initiatives and various federal grants.

MEDIA CONTACT:

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