



NEWS RELEASE

Contact: Communications Office
Alice Avery, Communications Specialist
Alice.Avery@wakegov.com, 919-856-7550
[Communications Office After Hours, 919-857-WAKE](tel:919-857-WAKE)
wakegov.com/news

For Release: March 1, 2019

Have a Plan in Place before Severe Weather Strikes

March 3 - 9 is Severe Weather Preparedness Week

Severe weather can occur with little to no warning. That's why Wake County officials urge residents to create and practice their emergency action plans during [Severe Weather Preparedness Week](#), which takes place March 3 – 10, 2019.

“Severe weather can happen anytime throughout the year, but spring is when we have historically experienced damaging storms,” said Josh Creighton, deputy director for Wake County Fire Services. “Dangerous conditions can pop up any time, so having a plan in place now, before something happens, is essential.”

County schools will participate in the statewide tornado drill at 9:30 a.m. Wednesday, March 6. The National Weather Service will broadcast the drill over NOAA weather radio stations and the Emergency Alert System, and residents are encouraged to participate.

In 2018, the NWS issued 104 tornado warnings for North Carolina and recorded 20 tornadoes. There were 184 flood or flash flood events across the state. In addition, the NWS issued 605 severe thunderstorm warnings and recorded 137 incidents of severe thunderstorms with damaging winds and 102 damaging hail events.

Wake County emergency officials recommend residents use the following safety tips:

- Have a family emergency plan in place so all members know where to go, who to call and what to do during a disaster.
- Know the terms: “watch” means a tornado is possible. “Warning” means a tornado has been spotted—take shelter immediately.
- Know where the nearest safe room is, such as a basement or interior room away from windows, and go there immediately if you hear or see a tornado.
- If driving, you should leave your vehicle immediately to seek safety in an adequate structure. Do not try to outrun a tornado in your vehicle, and do not stop under an overpass or a bridge.
- If you are outdoors, and there is no shelter available, take cover in a low-lying flat area. Watch out for flying debris.
- Following a storm, wear sturdy shoes, long sleeves and gloves when walking on or near debris, and be aware of exposed nails and broken glass.
- Be aware of damaged power or gas lines and electrical systems that may cause fires, electrocution or explosions.

Wake County residents are encouraged to sign up to receive ReadyWake emergency alerts to receive important information by text, email or phone in the case of a tornado or other emergency. Learn more at www.readywake.com or go to any Wake County Public Library and ask for assistance. Officials also recommend staying alert by listening to weather radios that broadcast alerts from the National Weather Service.

More information on tornados and emergency preparedness can be found at www.readync.org.

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