



# NEWS RELEASE

MICHIGAN STATE POLICE

## Statewide Tornado Drill Scheduled for March 23 *Severe Weather Awareness Week is March 20-26*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

March 18, 2022

**LANSING, MICH.** Gov. Gretchen Whitmer has declared March 20-26 as Michigan's Severe Weather Awareness Week, and the Michigan State Police, Emergency Management and Homeland Security Division (MSP/EMHSD) is calling on residents to take action by participating in a voluntary statewide tornado drill at 1 p.m. on Wednesday, March 23.

"Last summer in Michigan, we saw the devastating impacts of severe weather, from flooding to tornadoes and straight-line winds," said Governor Gretchen Whitmer. "Taking steps to prepare now can protect your home, your family and your pets. We ask that all Michiganders do their part to keep our communities safe."

"With an average of 15 tornadoes each year, this is a very real threat to our Michigan communities," said Col. Joe Gasper, state director of Emergency Management and Homeland Security and director of the Michigan State Police. "This drill will give people a chance to make a plan and put it to the test. By planning now, you can be better prepared when a disaster happens."

Businesses, organizations, families, and individuals are encouraged to engage in this statewide preparedness activity but are not required to do so. During the drill residents will observe or hear alerts on NOAA Weather Radios, TV and radio stations. To learn how local alerts are administered in your community and if your community is participating, contact your local emergency management agency.

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

To be ready for a tornado:

- Know the difference: **Tornado Watch** means conditions exist for a tornado to develop; **Tornado Warning** means a tornado has been sighted or indicated by weather radar.
- Know the signs of an approaching tornado: dark, often greenish sky; large hail; a large, dark low-lying cloud; and loud roar, like a freight train.
- Develop an emergency preparedness 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.
- 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.

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

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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.*

**FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:**

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