



PRESS RELEASE

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
MARCH 15, 2021**

SEVERE WEATHER WEEK SET FOR MARCH 22-26 IN IOWA

Statewide tornado drill will take place on Wednesday, March 24,

DES MOINES – The Muscatine County Emergency Management Agency, Iowa Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (HSEMD), National Weather Service (NWS), and Iowa Emergency Management Association (IEMA) have joined together to promote Severe Weather Awareness Week in Iowa.



Severe Weather Awareness Week, March 22-26, is an opportunity to highlight the importance of being aware of, and prepared for, severe weather.

The annual statewide tornado drill will take place on Wednesday, March 24, beginning at 11 a.m. Schools, businesses, individuals, and state and local governments may participate, keeping in mind COVID-19 safety guidelines, including:

- Staying at least 6 feet from other people outside of your household in your shelter location if possible
- Wearing a mask
- Washing your hands often, cover coughs and sneeze

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- Avoiding touching high-touch surfaces, such as handrails, as much as possible

These guidelines also apply if you must go to a public shelter or stay with family or friends during, or following, severe weather or other emergencies.

During the tornado drill, the siren tone will cycle throughout Muscatine County as it does in a true emergency. The drill is an excellent time to review tornado safety plans and conduct tornado drills in companies, schools, and other facilities. The Muscatine County Emergency Management Agency encourages all organizations to participate.

Regular monthly testing is from April through October and occurs on the first Monday of the month at 11 a.m.

If a severe weather watch or warning is in effect for the Muscatine County area prior to 11 a.m. on a scheduled test day, the sirens should **not** be tested that day. Outdoor warning siren tests will resume on the next scheduled monthly date.

To report any siren problems, contact the Muscatine County Emergency Management Agency at 563-288-3909.

For each day during Severe Weather Awareness Week, a different subject will be featured:

- **Monday** – Severe thunderstorms
- **Tuesday** – Weather warnings
- **Wednesday** – Tornadoes
- **Thursday** – Family preparedness
- **Friday** – Flash floods

Severe Weather Awareness Week is a good time to review your family's emergency plan and to check the contents of your emergency kit. Be sure to include in your emergency kit items you may need if you must shelter outside of your home, including masks, hand sanitizer, and disinfectant wipes.



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Learn more on sheltering safely and protecting yourself and others from COVID-19 at:

<https://www.cdc.gov/disasters/hurricanes/covid-19/public-disaster-shelter-during-covid.html>

Additional information about the tornado drill can be found on local NWS websites.

For more information on severe weather preparedness, visit www.beready.iowa.gov

For Muscatine County Outdoor Warning Siren locations, visit

<https://www.muscatinecountyiowa.gov/219/Emergency-Management>

Follow HSEMD and NWS on social media using the hashtag #IAwx and #ReadyIowa.