



# PRESS RELEASE

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## HOW TO BE MORE PREPARED FOR SEVERE WEATHER

Become informed during Severe Weather Awareness Week in Iowa March 25-29

**MUSCATINE, Iowa** – There are three simple steps that you can take to be more prepared at any time of the year for severe weather according to the National Weather Service (NWS).

**Make a plan.** Knowing what to do in the event of an emergency is key. You and your family may not be together when an emergency happens, so knowing what to do, where you will go, and how to get in touch with family members is important. Make sure everyone in your family knows what to do.

- **Create a family communication plan.** Choose an out-of-town friend or relative to be a contact point for family members to call if you are separated during an emergency. Make sure everyone knows how and when to call 911 or local emergency medical services. Post emergency contact phone numbers near telephones.
- **Develop a family evacuation plan.** Contact your local emergency management agency to learn about your community's emergency plan, the location of shelters and hospitals, and evacuation routes. Most shelters do not accept pets. Prepare a list of kennels, friends, and family members who may be able to care for your pet in an emergency. If you are able to take your pet to a shelter, the pet must have current vaccination record, a pet carrier, and a supply of food.



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- **Address special needs.** Make plans to ensure the needs of someone you know who is elderly or dependent on life-sustaining or health-related equipment such as a ventilator or respirator.
- [Create a family emergency plan \(PDF\)](#)
- [Create a wallet-size family emergency plan \(PDF\)](#)

**Build a kit.** Your emergency supply kit should have everything you need to sustain you and your family for 3-5 days. In an emergency, there are items you and your family will need. Pack a bag with items listed below. After assembling your kit, store it in a place known to all household members. Review the contents of your kit periodically to make sure stored medicines are up to date.

- Water and non-perishable food for each person for 3-5 days.
- First aid kit.
- Money.
- Battery-operated flashlight and radio, and extra batteries for each.
- Extra clothing and bedding (including shoes).
- Personal hygiene items.
- Specialty items such as prescription medications, baby formula, diapers, and pet supplies.
- Plates, cups, utensils, and a can opener.
- Copies of important documents such as driver's licenses, birth certificates, insurance policies, and financial information.
- [Get your emergency supply kit checklist \(PDF\)](#)

**Be Aware.** Learn about the hazards that can affect your community, and learn how to get information about current weather and road conditions. Pay attention to the news. Local radio and television stations provide up-to-date weather information.

- **Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEAs)** are short emergency messages from authorized federal, state, local, tribal and territorial public alerting authorities that can be broadcast



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from cell towers to any WEA-enabled mobile device in a locally targeted area. Wireless providers primarily use cell broadcast technology for WEA message delivery.

- WEA is a partnership among FEMA, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) and wireless providers to enhance public safety.
  - WEAs can be sent to your mobile device when you may be in harm's way, without the need to download an app or subscribe to a service.
  - WEAs are messages that warn the public of an impending natural or human-made disaster.
  - The text messages are short, designed to get your attention with a unique sound and vibration repeated twice, and can provide immediate, life-saving information.
  - Learn more at [Wireless Emergency Alerts](#).
- **Emergency Alert System (EAS)** is a national public warning system that requires radio and TV broadcasters, cable TV, wireless cable systems, satellite and wireline operators to provide the President with capability to address the American people within 10 minutes during a national emergency.
  - State and local authorities may also use the system to deliver important emergency information such as weather information, imminent threats, AMBER alerts, and local incident information targeted to specific areas.
  - Learn more at [Emergency Alert System](#).
- **NOAA Weather Radio** is another way to receive weather and other emergency alerts that can be programmed so that you receive only the alerts for your county or specific counties. Learn more at [Weather Radio](#).
- **Alert Iowa Statewide Messaging System (ALERT IOWA)** is the State of Iowa's official emergency notification system. Through Alert Iowa, state and local officials are able to utilize a single, statewide notification system that provides local control of how and when to disseminate emergency and public safety messages to residents. To learn more and to sign up to receive free alerts via text message, email, and/or voice message go to [Alert Iowa](#).



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- **511 Information.** The Iowa Department of Transportation offers real time information on current road conditions on their [website](#) or [application](#).
- **Warning Sirens.** A community warning siren is part of an outdoor, all-hazards siren system that is used to warn the general population of potential danger in a short amount of time. During a severe weather event, the sirens are activated when one of the following criteria is met:
  - Tornado Warning issued by the National Weather Service;
  - Tornado or funnel cloud reported by a trained weather spotter; or
  - Thunderstorm Warning issued by the National Weather Service or a report from a trained weather spotter that includes:
    - Wind 70mph or greater and/or
    - Golf ball sized hail or larger

To find out more or to dig deeper go to [Ready.Iowa](#).