



## Shelby County Office of Preparedness HLS / EMA

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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 17, 2014

## Tennessee Severe Weather Awareness Week

The Shelby County Office of Preparedness, under the direction of Bob Nations, Jr., in partnership with the National Weather Service and the Tennessee Emergency Management Agency, invites citizens to get prepared during Tennessee's Severe Weather Awareness Week. For these six days, Shelby County citizens are reminded of the potential dangerous weather events in our state and how to survive them.

**Monday, February 17: Flooding / Flash Floods.** The number one cause of weather-related fatalities, flooding, can occur anywhere there is rainfall. Shelby County experienced major flooding in 2011 with record-breaking river crests. When faced with flowing or standing water on roadways, "Turn around, don't drown!"

**Tuesday, February 18: Lightning, the Underrated Killer!** If you can see lightning or hear thunder, you are close enough to be struck by lightning. All thunderstorms have lightning. "When thunder roars, go indoors!"

**Wednesday, February 19: Tornado Safety / Preparedness Day.** A state-side tornado drill will be conducted at 9:30 a.m. All interested agencies, businesses, and families are welcome to join the drill. Outdoor warning sirens are tested in Shelby County Wednesdays at 3:30 p.m. if no inclement weather. The Office of Preparedness invites citizens to register their home or business storm shelter at [www.staysafeshelby.us](http://www.staysafeshelby.us).

Also, a **SKYWARN Storm-Spotter Class** will be held on **Wednesday, February 19**, 2 p.m., at the Shelby County Emergency Operations Center, 1075 Mullins Station Road. Volunteer weather spotters are trained to assist the National Weather Service by identifying and reporting local weather conditions, downed trees, flooded streets, funnel clouds, and snow accumulation. For more information, visit [www.weather.gov](http://www.weather.gov).

**Thursday, February 20: Severe Thunderstorms / straight-line winds.** Heed watches and warnings and take cover! A severe thunderstorm will have either hail 1" or larger, winds 58 miles per hour, or a tornado. They occur most often in the spring, but can happen any time of the year.

**Friday, February 21: NOAA weather radio / EAS.** Keep a weather radio or ALERT FM with you at all times. Listen to warning from the **Emergency Alert System** sent for a large population to warn of threats and hazards. Take advantage of free phone apps for wireless emergency alerts or "WEAs" and upload the ReadyTN app for Tennessee alerts and preparedness information at [www.tnema.org](http://www.tnema.org).

### For severe weather, remember the five steps to survive and stay safe:

- Know your risks (severe thunderstorms, tornado, straight-line winds, ice snow, hail, sleet, flooding).
- Create a disaster kit for home, work and auto for you and your pets to sustain you for 7 days.
- Make a plan! Decide where your "safe place" is at home, work, and in the community.
- Stay informed with a NOAA all-hazards weather radio, ALERT FM, and phone alerts.
- Check on neighbors - those who cannot take care of themselves and may need help.

The Office of Preparedness is recognized by the National Weather Service as a "StormReady" agency.

End of Release