



2013 Tornado and Severe Weather Awareness Drill

Scheduled for Thursday April 18, 2013

The 2013 Tornado Drill will consist of a mock tornado watch and a mock tornado warning for all of Wisconsin. It will utilize real, live Emergency Alert System codes and sounds.

DRILL SCHEDULE:

1:00 p.m. – National Weather Service issues a mock tornado watch for all of Wisconsin (a watch means tornadoes are possible in your area. Remain alert for approaching storms).

1:45 p.m. - National Weather Service issues mock tornado warning for all of Wisconsin (a warning means a tornado has been sighted or indicated on weather radar. Move to a safe place immediately).

2:00 p.m. – End of mock tornado watch/warning drill – National Weather service issues a mock Severe Weather Statement for all of Wisconsin. The mock Severe Weather Statement indicates the drill has ended.



The tornado drill will take place even if the sky is cloudy, dark and/or rainy. If actual severe storms are expected in the state on Thursday April 18, the tornado drill will be postponed until Friday, April 19th with the same times. If severe storms are possible Friday the drill will be cancelled.

The drill will also occur at the same time in Minnesota and will be broadcast on radio and TV stations in that state as well.

For the second year in row, the drill will be a true, end-to-end test involving interruption of broadcast radio, TV and cable stations, and tone-alerting of the test watch and warning on NOAA Weather Radios (also known as Emergency Weather Radios). The tornado warning at 1:45 p.m. will last about one minute on radio and TV stations across Wisconsin. When it is done stations will return to normal programming. Television viewers and radio station and emergency radio listeners will hear a message indicating that **"this is a test."**



This is a great opportunity for you to practice your tornado emergency plan with family, friends, and co-workers. Hundreds of schools will also participate in the drill. During tornado season, **Listen, Act and Live.** Don't ignore watches and warnings. Listen and take action. Every second counts. Don't wait... go to a safe place right away!

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Frequently Asked Questions about the Tornado Test

How does the National Weather Service deliver this tornado test and real tornado watches and warnings? They use something called the Emergency Alert System.

What is the Emergency Alert System (EAS)? EAS is a national public alert and warning system that enables the President of the United States to address the American public during extreme emergencies. Alerting authorities like the National Weather Service can also use the state and local EAS to send alerts and warnings to radio and television stations, cable television, and NOAA Weather Radios (also known as Emergency Weather Radios).



Why do this test? The National Weather Service, Wisconsin Emergency Management and the Wisconsin Broadcasters Association felt it was important to allow the public to truly test their NOAA Weather Radio receivers which can only be activated using a real Tornado Warning code. The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) requires a waiver to conduct this Live Code Testing. The code also triggers the alert to air on broadcast radio, TV and cable stations. The ultimate goal of any drill is to test all electronic systems that alert Wisconsin citizens to impending severe weather that can result in the loss of life and property. Conducting a live, end-to-end drill accomplishes this goal by tone-alerting watches and warnings on NOAA Weather Radio and broadcasting them through media outlets.

What Can I Expect to Hear/See? The test may look like regular, local EAS tests that most people are already familiar with, but there will be some differences in what viewers will see and hear. The audio message will repeat “This is a test.” The video message scroll may not indicate “This is a test” due to programming limitations. The message will last for approximately one minute and then regular programming will resume.

Where Will I Hear/See the Test? On all participating radio, television, cable providers (who are called EAS Participants) and NOAA Weather Radios.



When Will the Test Occur? April 18th at 1:00 p.m. CDT for the mock tornado watch, and at 1:45 p.m. CDT for the mock tornado warnings. At 2:00 p.m. CDT, tornado test will end with an expiration test Severe Weather Statement. This expiration statement is not tone-alerted on NOAA Weather Radio.

What Would Cause the Test to be Postponed or Cancelled? The tornado drill will take place even if the sky is cloudy, dark and/or rainy. We realize a cloudy, dark sky with rain may look threatening to some people. However, this is not a hazardous situation that results in a direct loss of life and/or property.

If actual severe storms are expected in Wisconsin on Thursday April 18, the tornado drill will be postponed until Friday, April 19th with the same times. If severe storms are possible Friday the drill will be cancelled. Severe weather is defined as tornadoes, damaging thunderstorm wind gusts of 58 mph or more, or large hail 1 inch in diameter or larger.

Are Any Other States Participating in This Test? Yes, the drill will also occur at the same time in Minnesota and will be broadcast on radio and TV stations in that state as well.

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Tornado Safety at Home, Work, or at Play

Listen, Act, and Live

- In a home or building, avoid windows. Move to a basement, and get under a sturdy table or the stairs. A specially-constructed "safe room" within a building offers the best protection. Use an internet search engine and search for "safe room" for more information.
- If a basement is not available, move to a small interior room or hallway on the lowest floor and cover yourself with anything close at hand: towels, blankets, pillows. If possible, get under a sturdy table, desk or counter. Put as many walls as possible between you and the storm.
- If caught outdoors, seek shelter in a sturdy building. If you cannot quickly walk to shelter, get into a vehicle, buckle your seatbelt and drive to the closest sturdy shelter. If flying debris occurs while you are driving, pull over and park. Now you have two options as a last resort:
 - Stay in the vehicle with the seatbelt on and place your head below the windows.
 - If you can safely get noticeably lower than the roadway, exit the vehicle and lie in that area, covering your head with your hands. Do not seek shelter under an overpass.
- Mobile homes, even if tied down, offer little protection from tornadoes. You should leave a mobile home and go to the designated storm shelter or the lowest floor of a sturdy nearby building.
- At school, follow the drill. Go to the interior hall or room. Crouch low, head down, and protect the back of your head with your arms. Stay away from windows and large open rooms like gyms and auditoriums.



(Joplin Missouri-May 22, 2011 an EF-5 tornado with winds over 200 mph strikes the town about the size of Wausau. (158 people are directly killed and more than 1000 injured)