

SPRING 2014

DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME – Sunday March 9, 2014



In addition to setting your clocks ahead one hour, DON'T FORGET to check the batteries in all of your home safety devices (smoke detectors, weather radios, and carbon monoxide detectors; check your fire extinguishers and first aid kits too). Also, remember the age of your detectors. The [Consumer Product Safety Commission](#) suggests that consumers replace smoke alarms every ten years and carbon monoxide alarms every five years.

NATIONAL SEVERE WEATHER PREPAREDNESS WEEK

Be a Force of Nature: Take the Next Step

March 2-8, 2014



Know Your Risk:

Every state in the United States experiences tornadoes and severe weather. Severe weather comes in many forms and your family's emergency plan should include all types of local hazards. As long as the right conditions come together, tornadoes can happen in December or August as easily as they can in April or May. A

tornado has been recorded in Oklahoma in every month of the year.

A total of 267 tornadoes occurred across 25 states during May 2013, including the devastating EF5 tornado that struck Moore, Oklahoma. In November 2013, at least 70 tornadoes spanned seven states in the Midwest, most notably Illinois. Two of the tornadoes were EF4 rating (winds over 165 mph). Being prepared and acting quickly is critical during the threat of severe weather.

Be Alert: Have at Least Three Ways to Receive a Warning

- Listen to the weather forecast on radio or television.
- Check <http://www.weather.gov>.
- Obtain a NOAA Weather Radio for weather updates.
- Listen for [Wireless Emergency Alerts \(WEA\)](#) on your cell phone.
- Do not rely on outdoor warning sirens.
- Be aware that a power outage could make telephones, the internet, and cell phones useless.

Take Action:

Before storms strike, [Be a Force of Nature](#) and take the first step to ensure that you and your family are prepared for severe weather. Important steps include:

- Developing a family communications plan,
- Putting an emergency kit together,

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Take Action (continued):

- Practicing your tornado drill to see how long it takes to shelter,
- Keeping important papers and valuables in a safe place,
- Getting involved in making your community safe, and
- Signing up for [America's PrepareAthon](#) on April 30 to take action and share the word to encourage others to participate. <http://www.ready.gov/prepare> or #prepareAthon

Be an Example:

- Studies show that individuals need to receive warning messages a number of different ways before taking appropriate action. Many people are more likely to act when the messages are received from a trusted source such as family, friends, or a community leader.
- During preparedness week, [Be a Force of Nature](#) – Know your risk, take action and be an example by sharing what you have done with your friends, family, coworkers, and others.
- Once you have taken action, share your story with your family and friends by creating a video and posting it to YouTube or another video sharing site, or post your story on Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter or any other social media site that you prefer.

Need More Ideas?

- Ensure that your family knows your surroundings and risks for specific weather events.
- Have an emergency plan, and know what to do before severe weather strikes.
- Post your plan in your home where family and friends who visit can see it.
- Identify an appropriate shelter in your home, neighborhood and community ahead of time. Consider sharing this information with neighbors.
- Learn how to strengthen your home and business against severe weather. Pass this on to others at a community gathering or faith-based meeting.
- Find out from your local emergency management office how you will be notified for each kind of disaster and sign up for additional alerts through social media and local news. Many emergency managers now use Facebook and Twitter to help alert their communities.
- Understand warning systems and signals and then share your knowledge with your coworkers and friends. Email these resources to your friends, and post to your social media account.
- After a storm, text your loved ones and let them know you are safe and where you are.

Learn More about Tornadoes: *How to Stay Safe and Informed*

Register for a no-cost, informative webinar about tornado safety at either of the following times:

March 3, 2014 7:00-8:00 PM CST <https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/705464009>

March 4, 2014 7:00-8:00 PM CST <https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/904390552>

For more information see:

<http://www.weather.gov>

<http://www.ready.gov/severe-weather>

<http://www.nws.noaa.gov/com/weatherreadynation/severe.html>

<http://www.srh.noaa.gov/oun/?n=safety-severe>

OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES – Coming Soon!

Sun Exposure

The sun can maximize the effects of alcohol so keep this in mind if you choose to consume alcohol when working or playing outdoors. Take it slow and drink lots of water. If you start feeling faint or light headed, get to shade and find water immediately. Use sunscreen of at least SPF 15 and reapply often. Pay extra special attention to ears, nose, face and shoulders. Fair skinned persons should wear sunglasses and a hat. Avoid sun exposure during the hottest hours of the day. Also remember, sunburn can happen even when it is cloudy.

Is Your Tetanus Vaccination Up-to-Date?



Spores of the bacteria that cause tetanus are found in the soil, in animal feces and animal teeth. In the spore form, the bacteria can remain inactive in the soil and still be infectious for more than 40 years.

A tetanus infection can happen when the spores enter the body through an injury or wound. The spores release bacteria that spread in the body and make a poison that blocks nerve signals from the spinal cord to the muscles, causing severe muscle spasms. Tetanus is completely preventable by being immunized (i.e., vaccinated). Immunization usually protects against tetanus infection for 10 years.

Older teenagers and adults who get injuries, especially puncture-type wounds, should get a tetanus booster if it has been more than 10 years since the last booster. Yard work has the risk of injuries including cuts and punctures that might mean exposure to tetanus spores. All vaccine recommendations for adolescents and adults are based on a variety of factors including age, overall health status, and medical history. To help understand what vaccines are needed for persons 11 years and older, complete the *Adolescent and Adult Vaccine Quiz* online. Print the results and discuss them with your doctor or health care professional at your next visit. Take the quiz at: <http://www2a.cdc.gov/nip/adultimmsched/>

Is International Travel in Your Future?

If you are planning to travel out of the country, find out what vaccines and other precautions are necessary for protecting your health - from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC): <http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/list>.

SPRING CLEANING

Chemical Safety



Mixing cleaning products that contain bleach and ammonia can cause severe lung damage or death. Chemicals in some cleaning products can be irritating to the skin or can cause rashes. Cleaning products that contain corrosive chemicals can cause severe burns if splashed on the skin or in the eyes. Mists, vapors and/or gases from cleaning chemicals can irritate the eyes, nose, throat and lungs. Chemicals in some cleaning products can cause asthma or trigger asthma attacks.

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Chemical Safety (continued):

Many factors influence whether a cleaning chemical will cause health problems. Some important factors to consider include:

- Chemical ingredients in the cleaning product,
- How the cleaning product is being used or stored,
- Ventilation in the area where the cleaning product is used,
- Whether there are splashes and spills,
- Whether the cleaning product comes in contact with the skin, and
- Whether mists, vapors and/or gases are released.

Always read the product label carefully before use. Also, a quick way to check on household chemicals, their possible side effects, and how to safely dispose of them is available from the Household Products Database at the National Institutes of Health. Categories include Auto Products, Inside the Home; Pesticides; Landscape/Yard; Personal Care; Home Maintenance; Arts/Crafts; Pet Care; and Home Office. See: <http://hpd.nlm.nih.gov/>

Safely Dispose of Unwanted Medications



Don't flush those old medications - The Oklahoma Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs has numerous convenient drop-off sites across Oklahoma to safely dispose of unneeded medications at no cost. For the closest drop-off locations, visit: <https://portal.obn.ok.gov/takeback/default.aspx>.

Although your disposal will not be monitored at the drop off sites, they prefer NOT to receive syringes, liquids, inhalers or any household chemicals. For syringes and needles, consider purchasing a sharps container or use a very heavy plastic container with a cap/lid that would resist needle punctures; households may then dispose syringes/needles in the regular trash.

The [Oklahoma Poison Control](#) recommends that for liquid medicines (e.g., cough syrups), consider mixing with coffee grounds or kitty litter and throw in the regular trash. For household chemicals, contact your city of residence about their recommended procedures. Check with your pharmacist or doctor about disposal of filled inhalers; empty inhalers can be thrown in the trash.

The Food and Drug Administration offers some additional disposal tips for medicines:

- Before throwing out a medicine container, scratch out all identifying information on the prescription label to make it unreadable. This will help protect your identity and the privacy of your personal health information.
- Do not give your medicine to family or friends.
- When in doubt about proper disposal, talk to your pharmacist.

Publication of the SSHER Center
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