



News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Emergency Services

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Severe Weather Preparedness Week March 6-12

FAYETTEVILLE – March 6 – 12 is Severe Weather Preparedness Week in North Carolina and a great time to remind residents to be alert and prepared for thunderstorms, tornadoes and other forms of severe weather.

“Spring is the peak tornado season, and severe thunderstorms can strike anytime,” said Cumberland County Emergency Services Director Randy Beeman. “It’s easy to become complacent because we routinely see thunderstorms, but these storms can bring damaging winds and hail, heavy rains that cause flash floods, and even tornadoes. The best way to be ready is to plan and prepare; have an emergency plan, prepare a supply kit and listen for weather alerts.”

In 2015, the National Weather Service issued 25 tornado warnings for North Carolina and recorded nine tornadoes. There were also 98 flash flood warnings issued and 133 flash flood incidents. The National Weather Service also issued more than 528 severe thunderstorm warnings, and recorded more than 542 incidents of severe thunderstorms with damaging winds and/or large hail.

Emergency Services officials recommend having a weather radio that broadcasts alerts from the National Weather Service. Many tornado fatalities have occurred at night when people are asleep and are less likely to receive a warning without a weather radio. Other safety tips include:

- Know the terms: WATCH means a tornado is possible. WARNING means a tornado has been spotted; take shelter immediately.
- Know where are the nearest safe rooms, such as a basement or interior room and away from windows.
- If driving, you should leave your vehicle immediately to seek safety in an adequate structure. Do not try to outrun a tornado in your vehicle, and do not stop under an overpass or a bridge.
- If you are outdoors, and there is no shelter available, take cover in a low-lying flat area.
- Following a storm, wear sturdy shoes, long sleeves and gloves when walking on or near debris and be aware of exposed nails and broken glass.
- Be aware of damaged power or gas lines and electrical systems that may cause fires, electrocution or explosions.

Find more information about tornadoes and overall emergency preparedness online at co.cumberlandnc.us/emergency_services.aspx or www.ReadyNC.org. You can sign up for CodeRED, the free emergency notification service, on the county’s Emergency Services homepage.

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