



disaster preparedness report

March 1981

National Weather Service

WEATHER AND FLOOD WARNINGS COORDINATION STAFF REPORT

MORE AND MORE PRIVATE SECTOR companies and firms are becoming aware of the need to indoctrinate the public on weather-related safety information. The March issue of AREA (Alabama Rural Electric Association of Cooperatives) published a comprehensive article "Springtime is Storm Time." The entire article concerns tornadoes; their formation, lifetime, and touchdown possibilities. The article also is explicit about NWS warning procedures and citizen safety measures.

HAROLD McCRABB, MIC-WSFO-FT. WORTH, received a Certificate of Commendation from the City of Fort Worth "for demonstrating outstanding leadership, cooperation, contribution of time and effort to train spotters, and help furnish the Metroplex outstanding severe weather warning service."

B. J. SMITH, MIC-WSO-ATHENS, reports NWS provided winter weather safety training to the City of Athens street crews. WSS-WSO-Athens, C. B. Masters, has worked extensively promoting preparedness information to civic groups. In addition, Masters has worked with the Northeast Georgia Ham Radio Club.

TORNADO AWARENESS WEEKS have certainly made an impact on the central and southern states. During the week of March 1, Tornado Awareness Week was declared in: Illinois, South Carolina, Alabama, Arkansas, North Carolina, Georgia, Oklahoma, Texas. Drill date for most of the states was March 3.

THE WEEK OF MARCH 15 has been designated for Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan. Drill date: March 19.

Beginning March 29: Iowa, Minnesota, Nebraska, South Dakota, and Wisconsin participate.

Other weeks by state are: Kansas, March 23; Mississippi, March 2; Tennessee, March 9; South Dakota, March 20.

Both Missouri and Ohio declared the entire month of March as Tornado Awareness Month.

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has worked closely with most NWS offices to prepare and distribute materials prior to the designated weeks. The cooperation from local media representatives rounds out these statewide activities.

LOUISVILLE MIC AND STAFF HAVE REALLY HAD A BUSY WINTER SEASON preparing for their statewide Tornado Awareness Week. MIC-Dave Reeves, reports that he has worked with the Kroger Food Stores to print severe weather safety rules on coupons during March. These will be distributed from 72 stores in Kentucky and Indiana. McDonalds sells hamburgers, but 22 area units will be distributing information about lightning and tornadoes during Kentucky's Tornado Awareness Week. The First National Bank of Louisville is also interested in helping promote public awareness and has agreed to distribute awareness materials. The Ham radio group associated with the WSO is now working on a special arm patch which will include some recognition of NWS.

Presently in the works is an agreement with the local bus company to print and display Tornado Awareness Week signs on the buses. This project was shelved for '81, but will be dealt with affirmatively in '82. Reeves and his staff have also worked diligently with local and state civil defense agencies to make Kentucky's drill successful.

Spotter's are also working to be up to date on how the Tornado Preparedness Drill will be activated so they can coordinate in an appropriate manner.

Louisville's MIC and staff have worked long hours in order to provide the people in their area of responsibility the best help that can be given.

THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF NVOAD (NATIONAL VOLUNTARY ORGANIZATIONS ACTIVE IN DISASTERS) reviewed the applications of the American Radio Relay League (ARRL) and Radio Emergency Associated Citizens Team (REACT) International, Inc. Both organizations met the criteria for membership and the Executive Committee unanimously recommended that they be admitted as members of NVOAD.

Upon polling the entire membership, both ARRL and REACT have been officially accepted as members.

ARRL....The ARRL is a national volunteer organization of some 160,000 licensed radio amateurs representing some 390,000 radio amateurs in the United States. ARRL maintains a field organization of some 5,000 leadership volunteers and some 70,000 registered radio amateur members of the ARRL--sponsored Amateur Radio Emergency Service. This large volunteer force is headed in each of 73 geographical sections by an elected Section Communications Manager. Disaster communications in each of those sections is under the direction of an appointed Section Emergency Coordinator (SEC) who has under his direction district and local Emergency Coordinators. Radio amateurs volunteer not only their services but the use of their privately owned radio communications equipment for use in disaster situations.

The ARRL, a voluntary membership organization, is national both in scope and purpose with disaster response conducted and directed at the local and state level. ARRL works at every level to meet the communications needs of people and agencies affected by disaster. To effect this liaison with cooperating agencies, the ARRL has entered into formal agreement with two member agencies of NVOAD, namely the American Red Cross and the Salvation Army.

Since its establishment in 1962, REACT has grown to 1,500 Teams and has 32,000 members. Teams are active in all 50 U.S. States, 9 Canadian Provinces, Puerto Rico, Virgin Islands, Guam, Australia, Philippines, South Africa, West Germany, Trinidad-Tobago and Venezuela.

REACT International has a cooperative understanding with the Red Cross to assist in disaster efforts. Furthermore, the 1,500 local REACT Teams cooperate with all local agencies, the National Weather Service, Amateur Radio Emergency Services, and at this time provide the only organized public service communications in the nation's largest two-way radio communications service--Citizens Band Radio.

REACT Teams agree to develop a 24-hour monitor system on Channel 9, the official emergency channel of the Citizens Band Radio Service. Local Teams also provide volunteer service in behalf of highway safety, and maintain emergency communications in case of disaster. Since 1962 REACT Teams have handled an estimated 85 million emergency calls including more than 20 million highway accidents.

Through REACT Safety Break Time, Teams serve over 1,000,000 cups of coffee and other refreshments annually to holiday weekend travelers along the nation's highways.

LARRY MOONEY, SR DISASTER PREPAREDNESS FOCAL POINT, will be the guest speaker at the annual National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (NVOAD) southern region luncheon. Attendees are persons from 23 voluntary agencies having disaster-related programs. The meeting takes place in Midlothian, Texas, April 9. Selected as the Midwest Regional Speaker for NVOAD is Elroy Jagler-MIC, Milwaukee. Jagler will travel to Silver Lake, Wisconsin, on April 6.

WSFO-FORT WORTH STAFF recently held a day-long news media weather symposium. Some 100 media and civil defense representatives attended. In addition to severe weather topics, presentations covered a wide range of NWS activities such as probability forecasting, winter weather, and NWR.

BY EARLY MARCH WESTERN KRAFT PAPER COMPANY will have distributed some 40 million grocery bags imprinted with tornado safety tips. The safety information has been revised and NWR is now mentioned on the bag. On the same subject, WSO-Jacksonville reports that a local supermarket chain has printed some 110 million hurricane safety bags during the past 2 years.

ERNEST ETHRIDGE, OIC-WSO-SHREVEPORT, recently received the American Radio Relay League's National Certificate of Merit. The award is presented in recognition of outstanding achievement in serving the public interest.

JACK SCHNABEL, MIC-WSO-LAKE Charles, recently accomplished a preparedness "First" when asked to give a hurricane preparedness talk from an oil rig anchored in the Gulf of Mexico.

DISPLAY MATERIALS FOR THE POP-UP UNITS should be ready for field distribution by the middle of April. The panels are designed to feature several different severe weather problems, or to be put into a single severe weather display. The panels will cover floods, flash-floods, tsunamis, storm surge, tornadoes, and hurricanes.

THE CITY OF DALLAS OFFICE OF EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS has worked with NWS to develop and distribute its own tornado publication. The entire brochure entitled, "Tornado Precautions" is reproduced in this issue.

THE NEW 16MM PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS ON THE SUBJECT OF TORNADOES should be out to the field offices late this month. The subjects of these spots are certainly topical; the danger of trying to outrun a tornado in one's car and recognizing the noise which usually accompanies a tornado.

DON'T BE SURPRISED TO SEE OWLIE SKYWARN STREAKING across your television screen. The Consumer Information Center has taken portions of Owlie Skywarn's Lightning Book (PA 77023) and has prepared 5 public service announcements for television. These PSA's range in length from 30 seconds to two minutes.

FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY (FEMA) Associate Director for Mitigation and Research, Robert C. Crawford, recently reported at a Congressional hearing that "...hazards will be most effectively mitigated when they are treated as a group rather than current practices of dealing with individual hazards." The subcommittee Chairman, Doug Walgren (D. Pa.), reported that the Committee felt a close relationship between civil defense-related activities and multihazard research could be achieved.

ROSS LAPORTE, MIC-WSFO-WASHINGTON, D.C. received a note of thanks from the 'A.M. Weather' staff for the accurate up-to-date advisories prepared by the forecast staff at the forecast office and forwarded to them prior to air time. By use of these advisories, the word gets across the country quickly. 'A.M. Weather' audiences are increasing, viewers from all walks of life are able to utilize local and national weather information for their specific needs.

THE FEBRUARY 9 ISSUE OF THE 'REGIONAL OUTLOOK' (Eastern Region's NWS Newsletter), contained an interesting series entitled 'Overview of Southern New England.' Managers of six cities in the Boston Management Area were asked to write a piece about the city (area) in which his weather service office is located. The cover letter is designed, of course, for recruitment of individuals to the various offices. The idea is clever, the materials included interesting, and the overall recruitment resulting--?

FEMA, NOAA, AND NWS-DISASTER PREPAREDNESS have begun work on a new film. This new production is one the subject of hurricanes. The film will emphasize public awareness, preparedness, and response. Production will begin soon, and the film should be ready for hurricane season 1982.

NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE OFFICES ARE ASKED TO HELP DO MANY THINGS. The WSO-Tucson staff received a note of appreciation from the television production company responsible for a soon-to-be aired film "The Day The Loving Stopped." Robert Jacks, Producer, stated they were able to work their schedule around the forecasts provided by Tucson forecasters.

TORNADO PRECAUTIONS



OFFICE OF EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

City Hall

1500 Marilla St. Room 02AN, Dallas, Texas 75201

Telephone: 670-4275

Function

The planning and preparation to minimize the effects of disasters, either man made or natural.

Additional Functions

In addition to its regular duties, the Office of Emergency Preparedness will provide speakers with films and slides to interested groups on topics of Emergency Preparedness. Classes are also conducted in Radiological Monitoring and Shelter Management. These programs are provided without charge to interested groups of twelve or more. For additional information call the above telephone number.

TORNADO INFORMATION

Tornadoes can occur any place in the United States at any time of the year. They happen most frequently in the midwestern, southern and central states from March through September.

Tornado "weather" can be hot, sticky days with southerly winds and a threatening, ominous sky. Familiar thunderstorm clouds are present. An hour or two before a tornado, topsy-turvy clouds appear sometimes bulging down instead of up. The clouds often have a greenish-black color. Rain or hail frequently precedes the tornado.

Tornadoes occur mostly between 3 and 7 p.m., but they have occurred at all hours.

Tornadoes in most cases move from a westerly direction, usually from the southwest. The tornado's path is usually 10 to 40 miles (the average length is 16 miles,) but they may move forward for 300 miles. The average width of the path is about 400 yards, but they have cut swaths over a mile in width. Speeds within the tornado have been estimated at 500 mph.

Tornadoes cause destruction with violent winds which uproot trees, destroy buildings, and which create a serious hazard from objects blown through the air.

Learn the tornado safety rules given in this leaflet.

For information on tornado conditions turn on your local radio or television station. Do not call Emergency Preparedness, the police or the weather bureau except to report the sighting of a tornado.

Keep calm and help prevent public excitement and panic.

Establish emergency plans for every school, church, hospital, hotel, business, house, industry, and trailer park.

Remember

TORNADO WATCH means tornadoes may develop in the area.

TORNADO WARNING means a tornado has been sighted in the area.

SIRENS When the sirens sound, turn on your radio or TV for information.

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Additional Copies May Be Obtained From

Director of Purchasing, City Hall, Dallas, Texas

Safety Rules

WHEN A TORNADO IS SIGHTED

Remember you are safer indoors than out except in a mobile home. Flying debris is one of the major causes of death and injury during a tornado.

I. If Outdoors:

- A. Seek indoor shelter if time permits; if not, get into a ditch, ravine, or low-lying area.
- B. If in a vehicle, park the vehicle and get into a ditch or ravine. A vehicle offers no protection from a tornado.

II. In A House

- A. In houses, the basement offers the best protection.
- B. In houses without basements, go to the center hallway, bathroom, or closet.
- C. Stay away from windows — get under heavy furniture.

III. In Apartments:

- A. Move to the center hallway, bathroom, or closet.
- B. Stay away from windows — get under heavy furniture if possible.

IV. In Mobile Homes:

Mobile homes are particularly vulnerable to overturning during strong winds and offer no shelter. Leave mobile home. Seek mobile home trailer park shelter if available. Otherwise, look for a ditch, culvert, or low-lying area.

V. In Schools:

Move to central hallways. Avoid gymnasiums and auditoriums with large, poorly-supported roofs. Stay away from windows. Follow the instructions of the principal.

VI. In High-Rise Buildings:

Move to the center of the building, the hallway or stairways. Avoid areas with large amounts of glass.

VII. In Industrial Plants or Warehouses:

Move to an area that has interior walls. Avoid windows. Avoid areas with clear-span, lightly supported roofs. Follow company policy.

VIII. In Shopping Centers:

Stay indoors. Stay away from glass. Move to an interior area close to interior walls. Sit on floors to avoid flying debris.

IX. General:

- A. Keep calm. It will not help to get excited. People have been killed by running out into streets. Even though a warning is issued, chances of a tornado striking one's home or location are very slight. Tornadoes cover such a small zone, as a rule, that relatively few places in a warned area are directly affected.
- B. Keep tuned to your radio or television station for latest tornado advisory information. Call the Weather Bureau only to report a tornado.

X. Remember a Tornado Watch means conditions are such that there might be a tornado — a Tornado Warning means one has been observed in the area.

DISASTER PREPAREDNESS ROSTER

NWS HEADQUARTERS STAFF 427-8090

Robert L. Carnahan	Chief, Wx & Flood Warnings	Lee Harrison	New Orleans (Focal)	682-6891
James B. Jones	Deputy Director	Alan Moller	Fort Worth	334-3401
Richard (Dick) Wood	Prog. Leader, DP	Larry Eblen	Lubbock	738-7362
Charna Lester	Writer/Editor	Brian Peters	Memphis	222-3833
Barbara Pakenham	Program Analyst	Francisco Torres-Cordero	San Juan	809-791-3490*
Betty Jo Norheim	Secretary	R. Calvesbert	San Juan (Fl.FI.Hyd.)	809-791-3490*
Maria Rice	Secretary			

EASTERN REGION

<u>William McKee</u>	Executive Officer	665-7028
Albert Kachic	Reg. Hydrologist	665-8639
Lynn Maximuk	Cleveland	293-4949
Mary Parker	Columbia, SC	677-5501
Rich Schwerdt	Washington, DC area	763-8300
Vacant	Hartford, RFC	
Paul Neff	Harrisburg, RFC	

CENTRAL REGION

<u>Laurence (Bud) Shaffer</u>	Asst. Chief, MSD-KC, MO	758-3239
Ken King	Fl. Flood Coord.	758-3229
Charles Stwertnik	Chicago	353-4680
Robert Corbett	Des Moines	862-4492
Kenneth Rizzo	Ann Arbor	378-2220
William Gery	Indianapolis	331-5411
Guy Tucker	St. Louis	279-7018
Steven Schuer	Topeka	752-2630

Focal Points

<u>Robert Kilpatrick</u>	Albany	562-6586
Frank Brody	Charleston	924-1405
Jim Allen	New York	662-5569
Dave Sisk	Pittsburgh	722-2882
Vacant	Raleigh	672-4436

SOUTHERN REGION

<u>Larry Mooney</u>	Regional DPM (FTW)	334-2812
Marvin Maddox	Atlanta	246-7586
Jay Shelley	Birmingham	229-1549
Steve Rich	Jackson	490-4639
Newton Skiles	Little Rock	740-5331
Neil Marchbank	Oklahoma City	749-4155
Clifford Brock	San Antonio	730-5025
Robert Case	Miami (Focal)	350-5547

WESTERN REGION

<u>Richard Hutcheon</u>	Public Serv. Met. (Salt Lake)	588-4000
Tom Dietrich	Fl. Flood Coord.	588-5137

ALASKA REGION

Burt Goldenberg	Chief, MSD-Anchorage	271-5127
Dial Seattle Operator		399-0150

PACIFIC REGION

Vacant	DPPF/FL.FI. Spec.	836-1831
Dial San Francisco Operator		556-0220

All numbers listed are FTS unless otherwise indicated
 *Dial Washington FTS Operator to get overseas FTS operator (809-791-3490)

