



disaster preparedness report

JULY 1981

National Weather Service

Because of rising printing costs and recent policy guidance we are limiting the size of future DP reports. We appreciate the items you are sending us (through your RO), but we will have to be very selective in the future to keep the report at 4-6 pages. We hope you will understand and will continue to keep us informed of your DP activities.

A new 30 second PSA on "Floods" should be available for the field in late August. A 30 second PSA on tornadoes and one on winter storms will be mailed to the field along with the flood PSA.

A joint FEMA/NOAA film on "Hurricane" should be ready for the field about March 1982. The new hurricane film will emphasize storm surge, size, and location of maximum winds, evacuation, danger of changing conditions in eye, tornadoes in the peripheral circulation, hazards of flying debris, and current footage of 1981 hurricanes, if possible.

The "Tornado" film, which was to be produced by fall, has been deferred to at least until the next fiscal year, by the President's Moratorium. Our belief that this is a needed film is shared by NOAA PA so we're cautiously optimistic it will be produced -- but we will have to wait and see.

Three new Warning and Preparedness Handbook Chapters will be available soon. One chapter will be an excellent Tornado Preparedness package including letters, press releases, etc. from Phil Shideler, MIC, (AM), WSFO, Topeka, and John Graff, MIC, (AM), WSFO, Minneapolis. Another chapter is a preparedness pamphlet for school administrators, principals, etc. by Edwin Addison, MIC, WSFO, Madison.

Dick Wood, Program Leader, DP, recently met with Ms. Deborah Rose and 11 others from Time-Life Books Headquarters in Alexandria, Virginia. Time-Life is putting together a new book series called "Planet Earth".

Dick just returned from a FEMA Region II Flood Hazard Management Workshop at Point Pleasant, New Jersey, where he served as a guest speaker during the morning session of June 17.

o Terry Ritter, MIC WSO Norfolk, Virginia, has been busy speaking to several marine user groups.

At a meeting of 45 Power Squadron leaders from several mid-atlantic states held at the NOAA Atlantic Marine Center, he gave a one-hour lecture on marine weather, concentrating on severe thunderstorm detection and safety rules.

At another meeting, Terry spoke to 50 Coast Guard Auxiliary National leaders and received a certificate of appreciation. He emphasized our lack of marine observations and encouraged relay of severe weather observations to the NWS through the Coast Guard. At a third meeting, Terry gave a weather briefing to 50 sailing captains for the annual Norfolk Harborfest race to Windmill Point and back.

o John Feldt, WSFO, Louisville, reports for March ----

1. Over 71,000 pieces of information were distributed from WSFO, Louisville during the month of March.

2. A feature film on tornado warnings was produced at the WSFO. This is scheduled to be shown later by the local ABC station. The ABC network plans to feature this filming in its national newsletter.

3. Kroger stores distributed DP information to all its stores. There were over 30,000 Tornado Safety rule sheets printed on bags.

4. McDonalds distributed the pocket tornado card to 15,100.

5. A local ABC television station distributed 8,000 each of the tornado safety in homes and pocket cards. They received requests for 1000 in the first day only.

6. Over 120 people wrote for additional safety information from an announcement on the weather radio.

7. Three local banks distributed a total of 16,000 tornado cards.

8. Taylor Drug stores are handing out severe weather plotting maps.

o Nebraska Tornado Preparedness Week, March 29 to April 4, 1981, was received enthusiastically across the state. It was the first such type of event held in Nebraska.

DMIC, Carl Gullach, WSFO, Omaha, reports that Nebraska's tornado preparedness week, held simultaneously with the State of Iowa, was sponsored by the National Weather Service in conjunction with Nebraska Civil Defense Agency:

1. Approximately a month before preparedness week, letters promoting the week and urging participation were sent to county civil defense directors, schools, hospitals, radio and television stations and newspapers across the state. Severe weather safety material was also included with the letters. On March 27, an official proclamation of the week was made by Nebraska Governor Thone at a ceremony in the state capital at Lincoln.

2. As part of the week, a voluntary statewide tornado drill was held on the afternoon of April 2. Many schools, hospitals, businesses, and radio and television stations across the state used the drill to test their tornado preparedness plans. Local civil defense agencies, county and local governments and spotter groups also participated.

3. In the Omaha area alone, over 80 schools and 6 hospitals participated by conducting a tornado drill and evacuating people to designated safety areas in conjunction with the test tornado warning.

4. To cap off the week, severe weather developed in eastern Nebraska the day after the drill, April 3, giving everyone a chance to put preparedness and response plans to a test under actual severe weather conditions.

o The National Weather Service has given a special citation to the Hilo Airport Weather Service staff for its work during five major weather disasters during a 15-month period from January 1979 to March 1980.

Paul Woolard, OIC, WSO, Norfolk, participated in a 45 minute radio program featuring Tornado Preparedness. The information provided by this panel should be most valuable to those in Columbus and the surrounding communities who heard it. Paul also received a note of appreciation for the time, and effort spent in presenting the Tornado Safety Inservice to the hospital staff at Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital in Norfolk.

o Robert W. Jacobson, Jr., MIC, WSO, Lansing, reports that the Tri-County spotter's almost got more than they bargained for in a recent meeting. About a month ago they made arrangements to come visit our office in lieu of their normal monthly meeting. About an hour before their arrival, a severe thunderstorm traversed lower Michigan through Calhoun and Jackson Counties. The 80 members of this group came just as the last warning expired. Roberta Reisner, Bill Entemann, and Robert took turns answering questions and showing these folks around.

o Phil Shideler, MIC (AM), WSFO, Topeka, reports that Tornado Awareness Week was a super success in Kansas with the statewide tornado drill on March 25. There is a great deal of evidence that there is continually more planning and participation going on by Emergency Preparedness officials and communities with every passing year.

o The Legislative Assembly of North Dakota amended a State Century Code to provide for tornado and disaster emergency drills in public schools. Karl A. Silverman is to be commended for his efforts in getting this amendment passed.

o Jim Zoller, MIC, WSFO, Omaha, reports that the City of Omaha has a group of Volunteer Park Rangers that work under the Omaha Park Service in cooperation with the Omaha Police. On Monday, April 20, they were trained by Jim Zoller on tornado safety and spotting. The Tornado Spotter Training film was shown. The meeting was a great success with many questions and answers. The Rangers now are part of the Tornado Spotters Network for the Omaha area.

o OIC Morgan Ballard and staff, WSO, Fort Wayne have been very busy in local DP work:

1. The highlight was a TV special entitled, TORNADO! ARE YOU READY? The idea for the format and program originated with Morgan Ballard, OIC, WSO FWA. Morgan felt that through the media we could touch more persons outside of Fort Wayne with a TV special. Through the cooperation and assistance of TV-15 Meteorologist, Paul Barys, WANE-TV prepared a 30 minute special that was originally aired at 7 p.m. EST on Wednesday, March 18, the night before the statewide Tornado Drill.

2. Through April 30...WSO Fort Wayne has conducted spotter training sessions for 1,409 persons, included in this number were 425 HAMS and the remainder were REACT, Volunteer Fire personnel, law and public citizens.

3. There are at least three new Spotter Networks on the drawing board with implementation expected during the month of May.

4. Another side note...even with exhausted travel funds...7 more spotter training sessions are already scheduled during the month of May.

o Flash Flood Awareness activities have been completed successfully in the states of Washington, Colorado and Utah. In addition, Arizona is planning a Flash Flood Awareness Week, June 14-20. A proclamation for Governor Babbitt's signature, along with several radio and TV spots featuring Phoenix's MIC Claire Jensen, are in the process of being prepared. Oregon planned a Flash Flood Awareness Week in late May. Jim Wakefield, MIC, WSFO Portland, worked closely with State Director of Emergency Services to finalize that state's proclamation for Governor Atiyeh's signature. Congratulations to offices in all 5 states for their excellent efforts to publicize the threat of flash floods.

o The flash flood drill in Colorado was the last of the 12 statewide drills conducted in the Central Region this year. The drill was held on May 13, during Flash Flood Awareness Week that was proclaimed by Governor Lamm. Ellis Burton, Denver MIC (AM), was in the state EOC during the drill and the overall drill operation went as planned. The preparedness activities and drill were well publicized and there was greater participation than expected. Consideration is now being given to alternating the annual Colorado drill between tornado and flash flood.

o On May 16, a group of REACT team members met with Don Lust, Lead Forecaster, WSFO, Los Angeles. The members will be used as part of a spotter network along with the GMRS UHF repeater system to report to the forecast office excessive rainfall amounts in short periods of time.