



Weather



WATCHES, WARNINGS AND ADVISORIES

In Michigan, we face the threat of severe weather, flooding and other natural disasters. Decisions that you make in preparation for these emergencies can lessen the impact they have on the lives of your family and on your community. Being prepared is a very important part of staying safe. You can prepare for the unexpected by creating a family disaster plan and keeping a disaster supply kit on hand

It is very important to understand the difference between a severe weather **WATCH** and **WARNING**. **WATCHES** and **WARNINGS** are issued for Tornadoes, Severe Thunderstorms, or Flash Floods.

The National Weather Service has developed a multi-tier concept for forecasting all types of hazardous weather. These are:

Outlook - A hazardous weather outlook is issued daily to indicate that a hazardous weather or hydrologic event may occur in the next several days. The outlook will include information about potential severe thunderstorms, heavy rain or flooding, winter weather, extremes of heat or cold, etc., that may develop over the next 7 days with an emphasis on the first 24 hours of the forecast. It is intended to provide information to those who need considerable lead time to prepare for the event.

Watch - A watch is used when the risk of a hazardous weather or hydrologic event has increased significantly, but its occurrence, location or timing is still uncertain. It is intended to provide enough lead time so those who need to set their plans in motion can do so. A watch means that hazardous weather is possible. People should have a plan of action in case a storm threatens and they should listen for later information and possible warnings especially when planning travel or outdoor activities.

Warning - A warning is issued when a hazardous weather or hydrologic event is occurring, imminent or likely. A warning means weather conditions pose a threat to life or property. People in the path of the storm need to take protective action.

Advisory - An advisory is issued when a hazardous weather or hydrologic event is occurring, imminent or likely. Advisories are for less serious conditions than warnings,

that cause significant inconvenience and if caution is not exercised, could lead to situations that may threaten life or property.

SEVERE STORMS 🌩️

Tornado Watch - Conditions are favorable for the development of severe thunderstorms and tornadoes in and close to the watch area. These watches are issued for large areas by the Storm Prediction Center in Norman, Oklahoma, and are usually valid for four to six hours.

Tornado Warning - Strong rotation in a thunderstorm is indicated by Doppler radar or a tornado is sighted by skywarn spotters. These warnings are issued on a county by county basis by the local Weather Forecast office in Chicago/Romeoville.

Severe Thunderstorm Watch - Conditions are favorable for the development of severe thunderstorms in and close to the watch area. These watches are issued for large areas by the Storm Prediction Center in Norman, Oklahoma, and are usually valid for four to six hours.

Severe Thunderstorm Warning - A severe thunderstorm is indicated by Doppler radar or sighted by skywarn spotters. A severe thunderstorm contains large damaging hail, 3/4 inch diameter or larger, and/or damaging winds of around 60 mph or greater. These warnings are issued on a county by county basis by the local Weather Forecast Office in Chicago/Romeoville.

Flood Watch - Conditions are favorable for flash flooding in and close to the watch area. These watches are issued by the Weather Forecast Office in Chicago/Romeoville and are usually for the first 12 to 24 hours of a forecast.

Flash Flood Warning - Flash flooding is occurring, imminent or highly likely. A flash flood is a flood that occurs within 6 hours of excessive rainfall and that poses a threat to life and/or property. Ice jams and dam failures can also cause flash floods. These warnings are issued on a county by county basis by the local Weather Forecast Office in Chicago/Romeoville and are generally in effect for up to 6 hours.

Flood Warning - General or areal flooding of streets, low-lying areas, urban storm drains, creeks and small streams is occurring, imminent, or highly likely. Flood warnings are issued for flooding that occurs more than 6 hours after the excessive rainfall.

Special Marine Warning - A warning to mariners on Michigan Lakes, of hazardous thunderstorms or squalls with wind gusts of 34 knots or more, hail 3/4 inch diameter or larger, or waterspouts.

Please check back next month for information on how to prepare for these emergencies, what to do during these emergencies and getting back to normal after the storms.

References:

National Weather Service Weather Forecast Office

<http://www.crh.noaa.gov/lot/severe/wxterms.php>

Michigan.gov

<http://www.michigan.gov/michiganprepares/>