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Wisconsin Tornado & Severe Weather Awareness Week
April 16-20, 2012
Listen, Act and Live!

(MADISON) – **Listen, Act and Live!** Those words could protect you and your family during severe storm season. Listening to warnings and seeking shelter immediately will save lives.

April 16-20, 2012 is Tornado and Severe Weather Awareness Week in Wisconsin.

Did you know that...

- Wisconsin averages 23 tornadoes annually.
- In 2011, 38 tornadoes in Wisconsin were confirmed by the National Weather Service, the fourth highest number on record. The earliest outbreak occurred on April 10th. On August 19th, a man was killed when a tornado with winds of 105 mph struck Marinette County. Five others were injured in 2011.
- In 2010, 46 tornadoes in Wisconsin were confirmed by the National Weather Services, the second greatest yearly number on record. Fortunately, no one was killed but 22 were injured and the tornadoes caused nearly \$30 million in property damage.
- The peak tornado season in Wisconsin is April to August, but tornadoes can occur any time of year, like the January 7, 2008 storms near Kenosha.

On Thursday, April 19, 2012, a statewide drill is planned. At 1pm, the National Weather Service will issue a mock Tornado Watch and at 1:45pm a statewide mock Tornado Warning. For the first time ever, Radio, TV and Cable stations across Wisconsin will participate in the drill. And for the first time, NOAA Weather Radios (also known as Emergency Weather Radios) will be tested during the drill. This is an ideal opportunity for schools, businesses and individuals to practice safe procedures for severe weather.

Wisconsin Emergency Management, ReadyWisconsin and the National Weather Service have planned a series of special efforts to promote storm safety including:

- A statewide TV public service campaign with tornado survivors urging everyone to have an emergency weather radio.
- A statewide campaign urging everyone to "Listen, Act and Live!". When you hear a tornado warning find the best shelter available immediately.
- Ready Radio Days. ReadyWisconsin teams up with the National Weather Service and TV stations across the state to promote the use of emergency weather radios.
- ReadyWisconsin Trivia Challenge with emergency weather radios as a prize. Go to <http://readywisconsin.wi.gov> to enter.



2012 Tornado and Severe Weather Awareness Drill Scheduled for Thursday April 19, 2012

There are two new and important changes to the 2012 Tornado Drill.

First, the drill times have changed with all counties participating in the mock tornado warning at the same time.

DRILL SCHEDULE:

1:00 pm – National Weather Service issues a mock tornado watch for all of Wisconsin (a watch means tornadoes are possible in your area. Remain alert for approaching storms).

1:45pm - National Weather Service issues mock tornado warning for all of Wisconsin (a warning means a tornado has been sighted or indicated on weather radar. Move to a place of safety immediately).

2:00 pm - END OF MOCK TORNADO WATCH/WARNING DRILL

If actual severe weather occurs anywhere in the state on April 19, the tornado drill will be postponed until Friday, April 20 with the watch/warning issued at the same time.

Second, the drill will be a true, end-to-end test involving interruption of broadcast radio, TV and cable stations and tone-alerting of the test watch and warning on NOAA Weather Radios (also known as Emergency Weather Radios). This is an historic first in Wisconsin. The tornado warning at 1:45pm will last about one minute on radio and TV stations across Wisconsin. (The drill will also occur at the same time in Minnesota and will be broadcast on radio and TV stations in that state as well). When it is done stations will return to normal programming. Television viewers and radio station and emergency radio listeners will hear a message indicating that **"this is a test."**



This is a great opportunity for you to practice your tornado emergency plan with family, friends, and co-workers. Hundreds of schools will also participate in the drill. Then during tornado season, **Listen, Act and Live.** Don't ignore watches and warnings. Listen and take action. Every second counts. Don't wait... go to a safe place right away!

Frequently Asked Questions about the Tornado Test

How does the National Weather Service deliver this tornado test and real tornado watches and warnings? They use something called the Emergency Alert System.

What is the Emergency Alert System (EAS)? EAS is a national public alert and warning system that enables the President of the United States to address the American public during extreme emergencies. Alerting authorities like the National Weather Service can also use the state and local EAS to send alerts and warnings to radio and television stations, cable television, and NOAA Weather Radios (also known as Emergency Weather Radios).

Why do this test? The National Weather Service, Wisconsin Emergency Management and the Wisconsin Broadcasters Association felt it was important to allow the public to truly test their NOAA Weather Radio receivers which can only be activated using a real Tornado Warning code. The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) required a waiver for this Live Code Testing to be conducted. This code also triggers the alert to air on broadcast radio, TV and cable stations. The ultimate goal of any drill is to test all electronic systems that alert Wisconsin citizens for impending severe weather that can result in the loss of life and property. Conducting a live, end-to-end drill accomplishes this goal by tone-alerting watches and warnings on NOAA Weather Radio and broadcasting them through media outlets.

What Can I Expect to Hear/See? The test may look like regular, local EAS tests that most people are already familiar with, but there will be some differences in what viewers will see and hear. The audio message will repeat "This is a test." The video message scroll may not indicate "This is a test" due to programming limitations. The message will last for approximately one minute and then regular programming will resume.

Where Will I Hear/See the Test? On all participating radio, television, cable providers (who are called EAS Participants) and NOAA Weather Radios.

When Will the Test Occur? April 19th at 1:45 PM (central time). That is the same time the test will be conducted in Minnesota as well as Wisconsin.



Tornado Safety at Home, Work, or at Play

Listen, Act, and Live

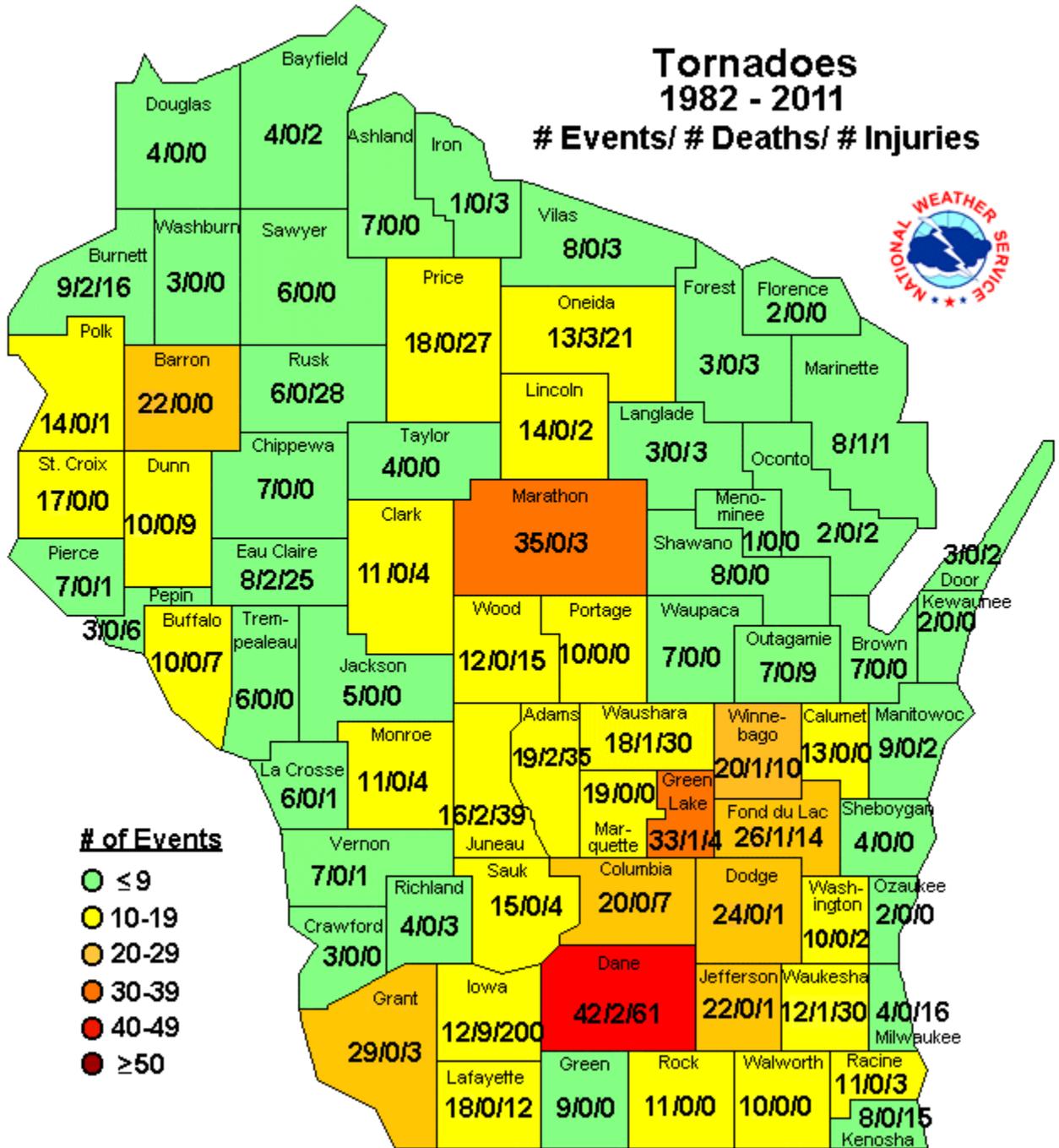
- In a home or building, avoid windows. Move to a basement, and get under a sturdy table or the stairs. A specially-constructed "safe room" within a building offers the best protection. Use an internet search engine and search for "safe room" for more information.
- If a basement is not available, move to a small interior room or hallway on the lowest floor and cover yourself with anything close at hand: towels, blankets, pillows. If possible, get under a sturdy table, desk or counter. Put as many walls as possible between you and the storm.
- If caught outdoors, seek shelter in a sturdy building. If you cannot quickly walk to shelter, get into a vehicle, buckle your seatbelt and drive to the closest sturdy shelter. If flying debris occurs while you are driving, pull over and park. Now you have two options as a last resort:
 - Stay in the vehicle with the seatbelt on and place your head below the windows.
 - If you can safely get noticeably lower than the roadway, exit the vehicle and lie in that area, covering your head with your hands. Do not seek shelter under an overpass.
- Mobile homes, even if tied down, offer little protection from tornadoes. You should leave a mobile home and go to the designated storm shelter or the lowest floor of a sturdy nearby building.
- At school, follow the drill. Go to the interior hall or room. Crouch low, head down, and protect the back of your head with your arms. Stay away from windows and large open rooms like gyms and auditoriums.



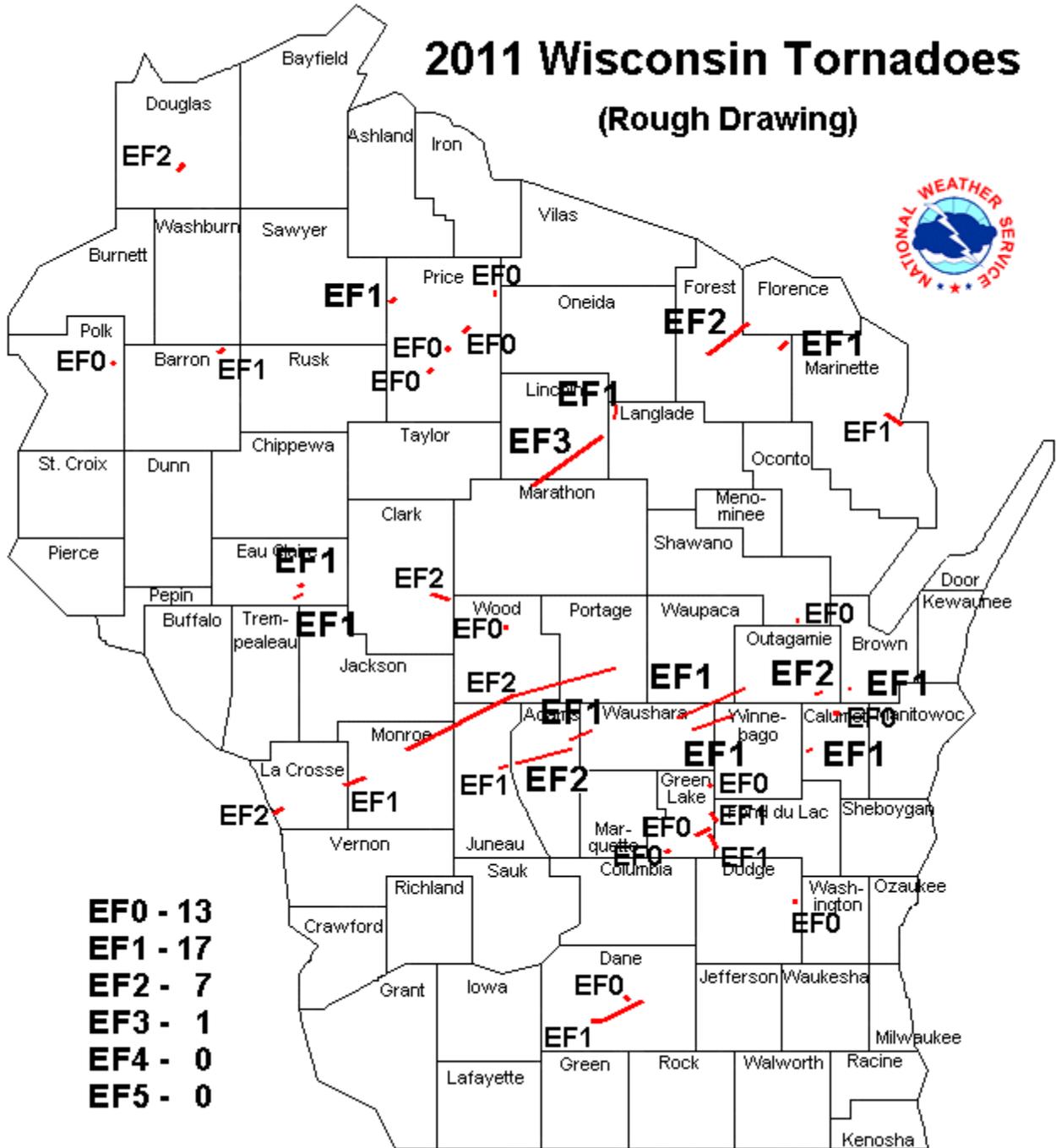
(Joplin Missouri-May 22, 2011 an EF-5 tornado with winds over 200 mph strikes the town about the size of Wausau. 161 people are killed and more than 1000 injured)

Tornadoes 1982 - 2011

Events/ # Deaths/ # Injuries



2011 Wisconsin Tornadoes (Rough Drawing)



Tornado Safety Before the Storm:

- Develop a plan for you and your family for home, work, school and outdoors. Know the safest shelter areas in multiple locations.
- Have frequent drills.
- Keep a disaster supply kit in your home including water, food that won't spoil and needs no heat to serve, first-aid kit, NOAA Weather Radio (also known as an Emergency Weather Radio), a flashlight and special items for children and elderly family members.

Tornado Watch: Severe thunderstorms with tornadoes are possible in your area. Remain alert for approaching storms. Be prepared to move to safety if a **Warning** is issued. Know what counties are in the watch area by listening to NOAA Weather Radio All Hazards or local radio or television stations.

Severe Thunderstorm Watch: Thunderstorms with large hail and damaging winds are possible. Be prepared to move to safety if a **Warning** is issued.

Tornado Warning: A tornado has been sighted or indicated by weather radar. Move to a place of safety now!

Severe Thunderstorm Warning: A thunderstorm with large hail and damaging winds has been reported or indicated by weather radar.

Warnings indicate imminent danger to life and property to those in the path of the storm!

Additional maps and information are also posted at <http://readywisconsin.wi.gov>. If you need further information, please contact your county emergency management director or Tod Pritchard at tod.pritchard@wisconsin.gov or 608-242-3324.

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