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For more information, contact Holly Miner
Nutrition, Food Safety and Health Agent, Wildcat Extension District
haminer@ksu.edu, (620) 331-2690

Severe Weather Preparedness Week March 6-10

Living in the Midwest brings a variety of weather conditions – sometimes on the same day. Spring and summer weather can include wind, rain, storms, lightning, flooding, tornados and hail. While spring and summer bring a heightened awareness of these conditions, they are not limited to a certain time of year.

The National Weather Service of Topeka has designated [March 6-10 as Severe Weather Preparedness Week in Kansas](#), including a statewide tornado drill on Tuesday, March 7th at 10 a.m. All Kansans are urged to participate in the drill by practicing the plans they have in place for seeking shelter from a tornado.

Chip Redmond, Manager of the [Kansas Mesonet](#), a network of weather monitoring stations throughout the state recommends having a plan and practicing it with children. Kansas averages 95 tornadoes each year with a high of 187. Peak tornado season occurs from months April to June. More weather safety tips are available online from [The National Weather Service](#), or from the [Kansas Mesonet](#).

National Weather Service severe weather tips include:

- Signing up for weather notifications
- Create a communication plan
- Having a plan and practicing it with family
- Prepare your safe room by having it reinforced
- Keep a severe weather kit with food, water, blankets, radio, batteries and extra clothes such as boots, gloves, and supplies for small children and babies
- Be prepared with first aid and CPR training

Lightning strikes in the U.S. 25 million times a year, according to the National Weather Service. “When Thunder Roars, Go Indoors.” is the slogan for lightning storms. An average of 47 human deaths occur each year due to lightning. Most of these could be prevented by staying indoors during lightning storms.

Here are a few terms that will help you understand severe weather to help keep you safe during

weather events:

- A storm **watch** means to be prepared. Severe weather conditions are possible in the watch area. Stay informed and be ready to act if the weather worsens and becomes dangerous.
- A storm **warning** means to get to shelter immediately. Meteorologists have observed severe conditions, and dangerous weather is coming or already present.
- Sometimes, a **weather advisory** is issued, indicating a less serious condition compared to warnings, but still requires residents to take appropriate precautions to avoid threats to life or property.

Whatever the circumstance, being prepared is key to staying safe during severe weather. Take time now to develop a plan, practice, and prepare for future severe weather events.

For more information about this or other topics related to nutrition, food safety or health please contact Holly Miner, Nutrition, Food Safety and Health Agent, haminer@ksu.edu, or by calling 620-331-2690.

Parts of this article were taken from an article written by Pat Melgares, Coordinator, Communications and Agricultural Education - News Media and Marketing Services, KSU.

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