



## **NEWS RELEASE**

### **CITY OF DEARBORN HEIGHTS**

**Department of  
Emergency Management  
and Homeland Security**

**Daniel S. Paletko**  
Mayor

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**For Immediate Release**

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**Michigan's Severe Weather Awareness Week April 16-22**  
*Statewide Tornado Drill to Take Place April 19*

***Dearborn Heights, Michigan*** – Michigan's Severe Weather Awareness Week takes place April 16-22. The Dearborn Heights Office of Emergency Management is calling upon residents to take action to prepare for severe weather – particularly this spring and summer – and be aware of the statewide tornado drill at 1:00 p.m. ET on Wednesday, April 19.

Businesses, organizations, families and individuals are encouraged to be a part of the voluntary statewide preparedness activity. Nearly all state of Michigan facilities as well as many local municipalities will be participating.

“Severe storms, including tornadoes can develop rapidly, and sometimes with little or no warning,” explained Bob Ankrapp, Dearborn Heights’ Emergency Manager and Public Information Officer. “Because of their unpredictable nature, it’s important to be ready in advance. We’re asking Michigan residents and businesses to take a few extra steps during the week to be aware of these hazards, and ensure they’re prepared and safe.”

*(more)*

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While tornadoes can occur during any time of the year, they are especially common during the late spring and early summer months. As one of nature's most violent storms, they can devastate homes and property in seconds. The average lead time for tornadoes to develop is 10 to 15 minutes, which means citizens need to be ready to react quickly when a warning is issued.

**To be ready for a severe storm or tornado:**

- Identify the lowest place in your building to take cover. If a basement does not exist, find an interior hallway away from windows, doors and outside walls.
- Go under something sturdy—such as a workbench or stairwell—when taking shelter in the basement or designated spot.
- Conduct regular tornado drills. Make sure each household member knows where to go and what to do in the event of a tornado.
- Stay tuned to commercial radio or television broadcasts for news on changing weather conditions or approaching storms.
- Know the difference: a Storm or Tornado Watch means conditions exist for one to develop; a Storm or Tornado Warning means that one has been sighted or indicated by the National Weather Service on their radar.
- Be aware of the following signs that can indicate an approaching severe storm or tornado:
  - Dark, often greenish sky
  - Large hail
  - A large, dark low-lying cloud
  - Loud roar, similar to a freight train
- Develop a 72-hour emergency supply kit with essential items such as a three-day supply of water and food, a NOAA Weather Radio, important family documents and items that satisfy unique family needs.

For more information about being safe before, during, and after severe weather incidents, go to [www.ready.gov/tornadoes](http://www.ready.gov/tornadoes) or visit the “Public Safety” tab on the City of Dearborn Heights website: [www.ci.dearborn.heights.mi.us](http://www.ci.dearborn.heights.mi.us).

*(more)*

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## **About Severe Weather Awareness Week**

Severe Weather Awareness Week is sponsored by the Michigan State Police Emergency Management and Homeland Security Division (MSP/EMHSD) and the Michigan Committee for Severe Weather Awareness (MCSWA) to educate the public about the danger of tornadoes and other severe weather events, including the precautions that can be taken to save lives and protect families. The MCSWA was formed in 1991 to encourage Michigan residents to be prepared in the event of severe weather. To learn more about the committee, go to [www.mcswa.com](http://www.mcswa.com).

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