

Severe Weather Awareness Week

When it comes to severe weather events, the key to successful response -- and survival -- is preparedness. Every year, the National Weather Service, the State of Texas and Galveston County work together to recognize Severe Weather Awareness Week.

Severe Weather Awareness Week is February 21-27, 2010.

This week is a good time to review your emergency plans, double check your emergency supply kits and get prepared for tornadoes, floods, hail, straight-line windstorms and other hazardous events. Basic preparedness plans should be in place at home, at work and at school and each family member or employee should understand the plan. When a severe storm or tornado strikes, there may be only a few seconds to react and find shelter.

The first step in preparedness is to ensure you have a reliable method of receiving weather information including TV, radio and NOAA weather radio, plus a back-up system if one goes out. Battery powered equipment and extra batteries should be part of the plan.

For home, work or school, shelter areas should be designated, whether they are in ground level windowless rooms or interior hallways on the lowest floor. Protect yourself from flying debris with thick blankets, sleeping bags or mattresses.

If you are in a vehicle, mobile home or portable classroom, move quickly to a strong building for shelter. If there is no shelter, lie flat in the nearest ditch or depression. Do not take shelter in a structure with a high, wide roof such as an auditorium, gym or shopping mall.

Choose a person to telephone outside your city to let others know that you are safe and choose a place for family members to meet if your neighborhood and home are damaged or destroyed.

Keep yourself informed of current weather information so you can make the best choices to protect yourself and your family should severe weather strike our area.