



SEVERE WEATHER ADVISORY - NO. 2

January 10, 2013

For Immediate Release

As of 1/10/2013 at 10:44 AM, THE National Weather Service (NWS) has issued a Severe Thunderstorm Warning, Flash Flood Watch, and Tornado Watch for our area or surrounding areas for the remainder of the day until 6:45 PM.

CONDITIONS:

Numerous thunderstorms with very heavy rainfall will move across southeast Louisiana and southern Mississippi this afternoon and evening. Numerous thunderstorms with very heavy rainfall may produce flash flooding today and this evening.

Additional rainfall amounts of 2 To 3 inches are expected with localized higher amounts to 5 inches possible. The locally higher amounts will be where lines of showers and thunderstorms can form and train over the same regions providing multiple rounds of heavy rain.

A tornado watch remains in effect throughout southeast Louisiana and into Mississippi until 2:00 PM. Tornadoes, hail to 0.5 inches in diameter, thunderstorm wind gusts to 70 MPH, and dangerous lightning are possible in the region.

A Tornado Watch means conditions are favorable for tornadoes and severe thunderstorms in and close to the Watch area. Persons in these areas should be on the lookout for threatening weather conditions.

PRECAUTIONARY/PREPAREDNESS ACTIONS:

Shelter and avoid travel is possible.

A flash flood watch means that conditions may develop that lead to flash flooding. Flash flooding is very dangerous situation.

Maintain situational awareness. Monitor forecasts throughout the weekend and be prepared to take action should flash flood warnings be issued.

Do not drive into areas where water covers the roadway. Be extra cautious when driving around open canals.

Be aware of rapidly changing weather conditions.

COK Office of Emergency Management (COKOEM) will continue to monitor weather reports and coordinate with Police (KPD), Fire (KFD), Public Works Department (PWD) and other City Agencies as needed. Communications will be established with Jefferson Parish Emergency Management (JPDEM) for any area-wide activities.

THUNDERSTORM

Thunderstorms are frequent occurrences during the summer months in southeast Louisiana. Taking proper precautions can reduce injury.

“ELECTRICAL STORM” - Popular term for thunderstorm. Sometimes applied to a relatively rare condition of disturbed atmospheric electric field in the lower atmosphere that arises when strong winds are blowing and much dust is in the air, but there is no thunderstorm activity. Electrification due to the blowing dust may charge fences and other metallic objects to such an extent that slight shocks are felt upon touch.

THUNDERSTORM - A local storm (accompanied by lightning and thunder) produced by a cumulonimbus cloud, usually with gusty winds, heavy rain, and sometimes hail. Non-severe thunderstorms rarely have lifetimes over two hours. A typical, non-severe thunderstorm life cycle consists of three stages: (1) CUMULUS STAGE-- warm, moist air rises (updraft) and condenses into tiny water droplets which make up the visible cloud. (2) MATURE STAGE-- the cloud grows above the freezing level; precipitation forms and becomes heavy enough to fall back to earth. This precipitation generates cool air which also sinks back to earth with the precipitation. (3) DISSIPATION STAGE-- Cool rain and downdraft spread throughout the storm replacing the updraft which is the lifeblood of the thunderstorm. The visible cumulonimbus cloud becomes softer in appearance, less distinctly outlined or "fuzzy" and dissipates, sometimes leaving only the high anvil cloud, as the storm rains itself out.

SEVERE THUNDERSTORM - A thunderstorm that goes from the mature stage to the severe stage before dissipating. Severe thunderstorms are most efficient "machines" because the updraft remains strong for a long time. They also occasionally contain rotations on a broad scale. Because of its structure, the severe storm may last for hours beyond the lifetime of a normal thunderstorm while producing large hail, high winds, torrential rain, and possible tornadoes. Officially, a thunderstorm is classified as severe if 50 knot (58 MPH) winds are measured, 3/4 inch or larger hail occurs, or funnel clouds or tornadoes develop.

Before Thunderstorms and Lightning:

- Remove dead or rotting trees and branches that could fall and cause injury or damage during a severe thunderstorm.
- Remember the 30/30 lightning safety rule: Go indoors if, after seeing lightning, you cannot count to 30 before hearing thunder. Stay indoors for 30 minutes after hearing the last clap of thunder.

Avoid the following:

- Natural lightning rods such as a tall, isolated tree in an open area
- Hilltops, open fields, the beach, or a boat on the water
- Isolated sheds or other small structures in open areas
- Anything metal—tractors, farm equipment, motorcycles, golf carts, golf clubs, and bicycles

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THUNDERSTORM

If a Thunderstorm Threatens Your Area:

- Postpone outdoor activities.
- Get inside a home, building, or hard top automobile (not a convertible). Although you may be injured if lightning strikes your car, you are much safer inside a vehicle than outside.
- Remember, rubber-soled shoes and rubber tires provide NO protection from lightning. However, the steel frame of a hard-topped vehicle provides increased protection if you are not touching metal.
- Secure outdoor objects that could blow away or cause damage.
- Shutter windows and secure outside doors. If shutters are not available, close window blinds, shades, or curtains.
- Avoid showering or bathing. Plumbing and bathroom fixtures can conduct electricity.
- Use a corded telephone only for emergencies. Cordless and cellular telephones are safe to use.
- Unplug appliances and other electrical items such as computers and turn off air conditioners. Power surges from lightning can cause serious damage.
- Use your battery-operated NOAA Weather Radio for updates from local officials.

During a Thunderstorm:

If you are:	TAKE THIS ACTION:
In a forest	Seek shelter in a low area under a thick growth of small trees.
In an open area	Go to a low place such as a ravine or valley. Be alert for flash floods.
On open water	Get to land and find shelter immediately.
Anywhere you feel your hair stand on end (which indicates that lightning is about to strike)	Squat low to the ground on the balls of your feet. Place your hands over your ears and your head between your knees. Make yourself the smallest target possible and minimize your contact with the ground. DO NOT lie flat on the ground.

After a Thunderstorm:

Call 9-1-1 for medical assistance as soon as possible for anyone struck by lightning.

The following are things you should check when you attempt to give aid to a victim of lightning:

- Breathing - if breathing has stopped, begin mouth-to-mouth resuscitation.
- Heartbeat - if the heart has stopped, administer CPR.

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THUNDERSTORM

- Pulse - if the victim has a pulse and is breathing, look for other possible injuries. Check for burns where the lightning entered and left the body. Also be alert for nervous system damage, broken bones, and loss of hearing and eyesight.

Marine Advisory Terms

Special Marine Warning: Issued for a brief/sudden occurrence of sustained wind or frequent gusts greater than 34 knots, usually associated with thunderstorms.

MARINE ADVISORY	DESCRIPTION
<i>Small Craft Advisory:</i>	25-38 mph or 22-33 kt winds sustained at least 1 minute Seas up to 7' within 12 hours
<i>Gale Warning:</i>	39-54 mph or 37-47 kt winds
<i>Storm Warning:</i>	55-73 mph or 48-63 kt winds

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TORNADO

TORNADO - A violently rotating narrow column of air in contact with the ground and extending from a thunderstorm base. The tornado is most often found in the southwest quadrant of the storm, near the trailing edge of the cumulonimbus cloud. Tornadoes and funnel clouds are usually pendant from (1) wall clouds, or (2) directly from the thunderstorm base, within a few miles to the southwest of the precipitation shaft. The spinning motion of a tornado is most often left to right on the front side and right to left on the backside (counterclockwise). Tornadoes have been called twisters and cyclones, but these words are all synonyms for the most violent storm on earth, with estimated wind speeds up to 300 mph.

Tornado Advisory Terms

ADVISORY	DESCRIPTION
<i>Tornado Watch / Severe Thunderstorm Watch:</i>	Conditions are favorable for the development of severe thunderstorms producing tornadoes in and close to the watch area. Watches are usually in effect for several hours, with 6 hours being the most common.
<i>Tornado Warning / Severe Thunderstorm Warning:</i>	Tornado is indicated by radar or sighted by storm spotters. The warning will include where the tornado is and what towns will be in its path. Issued when a thunderstorm produces hail 3/4 inch (20 mm) or larger in diameter and/or winds which equal or exceed 58 mph (93 km/h).

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TORNADO

Before a Tornado

Be alert to changing weather conditions.

- Listen to Weather Radio or to commercial radio or television newscasts for the latest information.
- Look for approaching storms.
- Look for the following danger signs:
 - Dark, often greenish sky
 - Large hail
 - A large, dark, low-lying cloud (particularly if rotating)
 - Loud roar, similar to a freight train.

If you see approaching storms or any of the danger signs, be prepared to take shelter immediately.

During a Tornado

If you are under a tornado WARNING, seek shelter immediately!

If you are in:	TAKE THIS ACTION:
A structure (e.g. residence, small building, school, nursing home, hospital, factory, shopping center, high-rise building)	Go to a pre-designated shelter area such as a safe room, basement, storm cellar, or the lowest building level. If there is no basement, go to the center of an interior room on the lowest level (closet, interior hallway) away from corners, windows, doors, and outside walls. Put as many walls as possible between you and the outside. Get under a sturdy table and use your arms to protect your head and neck. Do not open windows.
A vehicle, trailer, or mobile home	Get out immediately and go to the lowest floor of a sturdy, nearby building or a storm shelter. Mobile homes, even if tied down, offer little protection from tornadoes.
The outside with no shelter	Lie flat in a nearby ditch or depression and cover your head with your hands. Be aware of the potential for flooding. Do not get under an overpass or bridge. You are safer in a low, flat location. Never try to outrun a tornado in urban or congested areas in a car or truck. Instead, leave the vehicle immediately for safe shelter. Watch out for flying debris. Flying debris from tornadoes causes most fatalities and injuries.

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TORNADO

Tornado Damage Scale

Tornadoes are now measured on the **Enhanced Fujita Tornado Scale**, rating their strength and damage probability on a scale ranging from EF0 to EF5.

Fujita Tornado Scale

New EF Scale:	Old F-Scale:	Typical Damage:
EF0 (65-85 mph)	F0 (65-73 mph)	Light damage. Peels surface off some roofs; some damage to gutters or siding; branches broken off trees; shallow-rooted trees pushed over.
EF1 (86-110 mph)	F1 (73-112 mph)	Moderate damage. Roofs severely stripped; mobile homes overturned or badly damaged; loss of exterior doors; windows and other glass broken.
EF2(111-135 mph)	F2 (113-157 mph)	Considerable damage. Roofs torn off well-constructed houses; foundations of frame homes shifted; mobile homes completely destroyed; large trees snapped or uprooted; light-object missiles generated; cars lifted off ground.
EF3 (136-165 mph)	F3 (158-206 mph)	Severe damage. Entire stories of well-constructed houses destroyed; severe damage to large buildings such as shopping malls; trains overturned; trees debarked; heavy cars lifted off the ground and thrown; structures with weak foundations blown away some distance.
EF4 (166-200 mph)	F4 (207-260 mph)	Devastating damage. Whole frame houses Well-constructed houses and whole frame houses completely leveled; cars thrown and small missiles generated.
EF5 (>200 mph)	F5 (261-318 mph)	Incredible damage. Strong frame houses leveled off foundations and swept away; automobile-sized missiles fly through the air in excess of 100 m (109 yd); high-rise buildings have significant structural deformation; incredible phenomena will occur.
EF No rating	F6-F12 (319 mph to speed of sound)	Inconceivable damage. Should a tornado with the maximum wind speed in excess of F5 occur, the extent and types of damage may not be conceived. A number of missiles such as iceboxes, water heaters, storage tanks, automobiles, etc.will create serious secondary damage on structures.

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Floods: Watch, Warnings, Strike, Aftermath

Floods are the most common and widespread of all natural disasters. Some floods develop over a period of days, but flash floods can result in raging waters in just a few minutes. Flooding can occur during any season of the year. Because so much of the land is low, your property may be in a Special Flood Hazard Area as determined by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

The principle source of floodwater in the parish is rain. In the late summer, hurricanes and their tidal surges also pose a serious threat.

Floodwater collects because most of Jefferson Parish lies at or below sea level with land prone to subsidence or sinking. The low, flat ground provides little gravity drainage so water that falls in Jefferson Parish must be pumped out.

Hurricane protection levees have been built to protect life and property from storm surge. These levees do a very good job protecting communities during minimal hurricanes. However, sophisticated computer modeling of storm surge effects indicates most levees in Southeast Louisiana would be overtopped from the storm surge generated by a direct strike of a major hurricane, resulting in widespread flooding.

A potential catastrophic hurricane for Southeast Louisiana is defined as a Category 3-Slow (average 5mph forward speed) and all Category 4 or 5 hurricanes. Hurricanes in Categories 1, 2 and fast-moving 3 (average 15mph forward speed), are considered less destructive and dealt with through the use of normal emergency preparedness procedures.

FLOOD ADVISORY TERMS

ADVISORY	DESCRIPTION
FLOOD WATCH	Flooding is possible.
FLASH FLOOD WATCH	A flash flood, which can happen very fast with little warning, is possible.
FLOOD WARNING	A flood is occurring or will occur soon; the flood may take several hours to develop.
FLASH FLOOD WARNING	A flash flood is occurring or will happen very soon; you should find safety immediately.

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Floods: Watch, Warnings, Strike, Aftermath

WHEN FLOODING IS PREDICTED FOR YOUR AREA

- Check TV and radio often for official bulletins.
- Fuel car.
- Check mobile home tie downs.
- Adjust moorings on watercraft or move to safer shelter.
- Stock up on canned provisions.
- Check supplies of special medicines and drugs.
- Check batteries for radio and flashlights.
- Secure lawn furniture and other loose material outdoors.
- Elevate lawn equipment and machinery.
- Inventory flood protection supplies and equipment.
- Plan a place to meet in case you and your family are separated.
- Have an evacuation plan - know how to get to high ground fast.

WHEN A FLOOD WARNING IS ISSUED

- Stay tuned to TV and radio for official bulletins.
- Move valuables to upper floors or attic.
- Raise appliances above predicted flood levels.
- Bring in pets.
- Fill containers with several days supply of drinking water.
- Use the phone only for emergencies.
- Implement a flood protection plan (sandbagging, wrapping, closing levee gaps).
- Monitor local storm drains and clear debris to facilitate runoff.
- Clean out storm drains and sewers.

When a flood threatens your area, you will have to make the decision to either evacuate or stay safely at home.

IF LOCAL AUTHORITIES RECOMMEND EVACUATION, YOU SHOULD LEAVE IMMEDIATELY!

- Shut off water and electricity at main source and lock up.
- Take small valuables and papers, but travel light.
- Provide for animals and pets that shelters will not take.
- Use recommended evacuation routes. Do not drive through standing or flowing water and barricaded streets.

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DURING THE FLOOD EVENT

USE EXTREME CAUTION!

- Stay tuned to the TV and radio for information and official instructions.
- Stay out of disaster areas.
- Do not drink tap water until it has been determined to be safe.
- Do not attempt to travel until roads have been declared open.
- Drive carefully along debris-filled streets. Roads may be under mined and may collapse under weight.
- Stay clear of any downed or low hanging power lines and report them to the power company.
- Report broken sewers or water mains to the water department.
- Be exceptionally careful to prevent fires: lower water pressure may make fire fighting difficult.
- Do not use the telephone except for emergencies.
- Check with neighbors to see if help is needed.
- When cooking without gas or electricity, good ventilation is extremely important. Bottled gas burners or several candles taped together are safe and efficient. The use of portable grills is strongly discouraged. NEVER burn charcoal indoors. Always have a fire extinguisher handy.

RETURNING TO YOUR FLOOD DAMAGED HOME

USE EXTREME CAUTION!

- Before entering a damaged building, check for structural damage and possible imminent collapse.
- When entering a damaged building, do not use an open flame as a light source.
- Be sure children are safe and in good hands.
- Keep chemicals used for disinfecting and poisons used for insect and rodent control out of the reach of children.
- Wear protective clothing and rubber gloves when cleaning.
- Disconnect main electrical switches and circuits. Remove covers from all outlets and fuses or multi-breaker boxes. When dry, spray outlets and boxes with contact cleaner/lubricant.
- Check refrigerated foods for spoilage if power has been off during the event.
- Assume that water supplies are contaminated.

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