

# Fayette County to Participate in Severe Weather Awareness Week

## February 1-7, 2010

The Fayette County Department of Fire and Emergency Services in partnership with the National Weather Service and the Georgia Emergency Management Agency would like to inform all residents that February 1-7 is Severe Weather Awareness Week in Georgia. During this week Fayette County residents should take the time to discuss with their families (especially children) the importance of preparing for severe weather. It is also the time for residents and businesses to develop a plan of action that they could implement during severe weather.

Fayette County has made significant strides in preparing for and warning the public about severe weather. These include being one of the first Storm Ready Communities designated by the National Weather Service ensuring that our emergency management and public safety agencies are prepared to respond to weather related emergencies in our community. Also the County has installed 23 severe weather warning sirens throughout the county. These sirens are located in some of the most vulnerable and densely populated areas of the county to ensure adequate severe weather warnings are issued to the public. These sirens are sounded during tornado **WARNINGS** and during severe thunderstorm **WARNINGS** while under a tornado **WATCH**. Additionally, during significant weather alerts voice activated warnings are issued in recreational areas.

Another important part of our weather warning system is that when the National Weather Service issues significant weather alerts for Fayette County, sirens located in recreational areas will sound with a voice warning only for sporting events and outdoor activities. Significant weather alerts are often associated with frequent intense lightning, hail and heavy rain. During these significant weather alerts outdoor activities and sporting events should stop and everyone should take cover in a suitable shelter until the storm has passed.

Director of the Division of Public Safety Allen McCullough states "It is imperative that the public educate themselves about what actions they should take to ensure their safety during severe weather. Fayette County has made significant progress in utilizing a variety of methods to warn the public of severe weather. It is our hope that residents will heed the warnings that are issued to reduce the chances of death or injury from severe weather"

Listed below are helpful severe weather tips that should be followed before and during severe weather warnings.

### ***Before the Storm***

- Develop a plan for you and your family for home, work, school, and when outdoors.
- Know your county and the surrounding counties in order to follow the movement of the storms.
- Have a NOAA Weather Radio with a warning alarm tone and battery backup to receive warnings. Listen for sounding of the severe weather warning sirens.
- Listen to local radio and television for information.
- If planning outdoor activities...monitor latest forecasts and take necessary actions if threatening weather is possible.

### ***If a warning is issued or threatening weather approaches***

- In a home or building move to a pre-designated shelter, such as a basement.
- If an underground shelter is not available, move to an interior room on the lowest floor. Remember to put as many walls between you and the outside as possible.
- Stay away from windows.
- Get out of automobiles.
- Do **NOT** try to outrun a tornado in an automobile.
- Mobile homes, even tied down, offer little protection and should be abandoned.
- Occasionally, tornadoes develop so rapidly that advance warning is not possible. Remain alert for signs of approaching storms and take the necessary precautions.***

For additional Severe Weather Awareness Week information in Georgia and a multitude of weather preparedness suggestions click the link below.

<http://www.gema.state.ga.us/ohsgemaweb.nsf/1b4bb75d6ce841c88525711100558b9d/5b91ba1413d0607a852573a60077afe4?OpenDocument>

<http://www.weather.gov/om/severeweather/index.shtml>

[http://www.redcross.org/services/disaster/0,1082,0\\_601\\_00.html](http://www.redcross.org/services/disaster/0,1082,0_601_00.html)

### **IMPORTANT NOTICE**

Fayette County will be participating in the annual statewide tornado drill on Wednesday, February 3. At approximately 09:00 Fayette County will sound all its weather sirens as part of this required annual test. **This will only be a test!!!** If severe weather threatens