



Virginia Department of Emergency Management

News Release

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Governor proclaims March 11 as Tornado Preparedness Day

1.1 Million Virginians have registered for Statewide Tornado Drill at 9:45 a.m.

RICHMOND, Va. – From 2011-2013, a total of 67 tornadoes struck Virginia, killing 10 people and injuring more than 100. To encourage tornado awareness and safety, Gov. Terry McAuliffe has proclaimed March 11 as Tornado Preparedness Day in the commonwealth.

“At least four tornadoes already have been recorded in Virginia this year,” said Secretary of Public Safety and Homeland Security Brian Moran. “Fortunately, no one was hurt, but these destructive storms often form with little notice. It is so important that we all learn and practice what to do to be safe when a tornado warning is issued.”

Tornado Preparedness Day is set aside for businesses and organizations, schools and colleges, and families and individuals to focus on tornado safety procedures and to learn where to seek shelter during a tornado warning. As part of the day, the Virginia Department of Emergency Management and the National Weather Service sponsor the Statewide Tornado Drill. To start the drill, at 9:45 a.m. the NWS will send a test tornado warning that will trigger a tone alert and broadcast message on NOAA Weather Radio. The message will be picked up by TV and radio broadcasts, simulating what listeners will hear during an actual tornado warning.

When the test tornado warning is sounded, people should move as quickly as possible to a safe area in a sturdy building. Safe areas are basements and interior rooms on the lowest level of a building such as bathrooms, closets or hallways. In choosing a safe area, stay away from windows. Once in the safe area, people should crouch down or sit on the floor facing down, and cover heads with hands.

For help in conducting a tornado drill and to register for the Statewide Tornado Drill, go to www.ReadyVirginia.gov.

To view the text version of the governor’s proclamation, go to <http://www.vaemergency.gov/ready-virginia/stay-informed/tornado/gov-tornado-proclamation>.

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