

PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

COUNTY EXECUTIVE URGES RESIDENTS TO REVIEW SEVERE WEATHER SAFETY INFORMATION

Erie County, PA – County Executive Barry Grossman stated, “In light of current and past extreme weather related events, I have asked Dale Robinson, Erie County Emergency Management Coordinator to further detail proper procedures associated with severe weather activities to ensure the safety and well being of all Erie County residents.”

As a result, Emergency Management officials are encouraging residents and critical facilities to review tornado safety information in light of recent tornado watches and warnings. “One of the most important items everyone should have in their homes and businesses is a NOAA weather radio with alert tone capability,” said Dale Robinson. The radio is capable of receiving watches and warning when issued by the National Weather Service. The alert tone capability will alert owners when the National Weather Service issues important weather information, like tornado warnings. “Everyone should ask themselves ‘how would I know if a tornado was striking my community at 2 am in the morning,’” said Robinson. Many communities no longer have tornado sirens or not everyone can hear the sirens, thereby making an inexpensive NOAA weather radio the best solution. Pennsylvania residents can also sign up for Alert PA, which is a free service that provides warning information to cell phones via SMS, e-mails, pagers and, smart phones/PDAs. To sign up go to <https://alert.pa.gov/>. Many of the local television stations also provide weather alerts to those who sign up.

Everyone should be familiar with what a tornado watch and warning are. A “tornado watch” means conditions are favorable for the development of tornadoes in and close to the watch area. A “tornado warning” means that spotters have sighted or radar indicates a tornado on the ground, therefore, people should seek safe shelter immediately. The June 5th tornado that struck the Springfield and Girard areas did not prompt a tornado warning; however the National Weather Service had a tornado watch up for the area.

Residents should have a plan that includes where they are going to seek shelter from a tornado, such as a basement or the most interior room on the lowest level. Those living in mobile homes should have a plan to seek shelter in a nearby structure that is sturdier or a building with a basement. A family disaster supplies kit should also be assemble to provide for the immediate needs of your family for up to 72 hours. For more information go to www.ready.gov .

“We live in a area were natural disasters are a rarity but we must remain prepared for those exceptions, whether it be a tornado, flood, or ice storm” said Robinson.

