

# National Severe Weather Preparedness Week Media Toolkit

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## Be a Force of Nature: Take the Next Step A NOAA and FEMA Public Education Campaign

National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) National Weather Service and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) are teaming up for a third year to lead a public education effort aimed at improving the way people prepare for and respond to severe weather.

To prepare for the 2014 ***Be a Force of Nature*** campaign, NOAA studied how to best motivate people to take action to save lives and property. We knew we needed a motivating message that would inspire people to not only take appropriate action in the face of severe weather (go to shelter), but to also model that behavior for others in their social network. From NOAA service assessments after the 2011 tornado outbreaks in Alabama and Joplin, we know that some people will go to shelter immediately after hearing a warning on [NOAA Weather Radio](#), receiving [Wireless Emergency Alerts](#) on your cell phone or seeing it on television. However, many people typically wait for secondary confirmation before taking shelter. Social science research confirms this and finds that people are more likely to take preparedness measures in advance and action during an event when they observe others doing so.

After careful research and analysis, NOAA developed a creative message meant to empower people who take immediate action and go to shelter to use their cell phone and share with their social network that they are safely sheltered. In so doing, they are modeling the appropriate action for others to follow.

This year NOAA has selected the theme *Be a Force of Nature: Take the Next Step*. Being a force of nature means taking the proactive steps of knowing your risk, being prepared and taking appropriate actions before, during and after extreme weather. Even more than that, being a force of nature means saving lives by inspiring others to do the same through social media and face-to-face conversations with your friends, family and neighbors.

*Be a Force of Nature: Take the Next Step* asks that the public take a single preparedness action during each day of [National Severe Weather Preparedness Week](#), March 2-8, 2014. This can be as simple as preparing an [emergency communications plan](#) for your family. But the sum of these actions will ensure that communities are better prepared for severe weather.

National Severe Weather Preparedness Week joins state severe weather preparedness weeks, National Preparedness Month and [America's PrepareAthon](#) as part of a national effort to increase emergency preparedness.

Building a Weather-Ready Nation requires action by all of us. NOAA and FEMA can't do it alone. ***Be a Force of Nature*** by being prepared for and knowing what action to take during severe weather and other emergencies.

# Talking Points



## NATIONAL SEVERE WEATHER PREPAREDNESS WEEK

March 2-8, 2014

#BeAForce

### *Be a Force of Nature: Take the Next Step*

NOAA's National Weather Service and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) are teaming up for a third year to lead a public education effort aimed at improving the way people prepare for and respond to severe weather.

National Severe Weather Preparedness Week is March 2-8, 2014. The goal of National Severe Weather Preparedness Week is to inform the public about severe weather hazards and provide knowledge which can be used to prepare and take action. These actions can be used to save lives anywhere - at home, in schools, and in the workplace before tornadoes and severe thunderstorms and extreme weather strikes.

### **Know your risk:**

Every state in the United States experiences tornadoes and severe weather - A total of 267 tornadoes occurred across 25 states during May 2013, including the devastating EF5 tornado that struck Moore, Oklahoma, on the 20th causing an estimated \$2 billion in property damage. Acting quickly could mean the difference between life and death in these situations. Follow [weather.gov](http://weather.gov) to get the latest forecasts.

- Severe weather could happen at any time, anywhere. That rang true on November 17, 2013 when a late season tornado outbreak became the most active day of the year in 2013, in terms of the number of tornadoes. In November 2013, at least 70 tornadoes spanned seven states in the Midwest, notably Illinois. Two of the tornadoes were preliminary EF4 rating (winds over 165 mph).
- Being prepared and acting quickly could be a matter of survival. This is critical during the threat of severe weather. In May 2013, tornadoes devastated portions of Oklahoma. This outbreak included the deadliest tornado of the year on May 20 in Moore, Oklahoma where an EF5 tornado struck (winds in excess of 200 mph). The Moore tornado is estimated to have caused approximately \$2 billion in property damage.
- Severe weather knows no boundaries and affects every individual, so we're calling on people across the country to **Be a Force of Nature** in their communities and prepare.

- Be Alert! Listen to the weather forecast on radio or television. Check [weather.gov](http://weather.gov). Obtain a [NOAA Weather Radio](#) for weather updates and check for [Wireless Emergency Alerts](#) (WEA) on your cell phone.
- Severe weather comes in many forms and your emergency plan should include all types of local hazards.

### Take action:

During National Severe Weather Preparedness Week, join National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and do your part to prepare now. Being prepared is a collective effort. It takes the whole community to effectively prepare for, protect against, respond to, recover from, and mitigate against damages caused by tornadoes and severe thunderstorms.

- Before storms strike, **Be a Force of Nature** and take the first step to making sure that you and your family are prepared for severe weather. These include developing a [family communications plan](#), putting an [emergency kit](#) together, keeping important papers and valuables in a safe place, and getting involved to make your community safe.
- Sign up for America's PrepareAthon April 30, take action and share the word to encourage others to participate. [www.ready.gov/prepare](http://www.ready.gov/prepare) #prepareAthon

### Be an example:

- Building a [Weather-Ready Nation](#) requires the action of all of us. Each and every person across the country has the potential to **Be a Force of Nature** when it comes to weather-readiness. Studies show that individuals need to receive messages a number of ways before taking appropriate action.
- Many are more likely to act when the messages are received from a trusted source—family, friends, or a community leader.
- And, history teaches that a lack of awareness and preparation are common threads among all major weather threats. Knowing your vulnerability and what actions you should take could save your life and others.
- During this preparedness week we ask you to Be a Force of Nature – Know your risk, take action and be an example, by sharing what you have done, with your friends, family, coworkers, and others.
- Once you have taken action, share your story with your family and friends by creating a video and posting it to YouTube or another video sharing site or post your story on Facebook, LinkedIn, [Twitter](#) or any other social media site you're on.

## Need ideas for what you can do?

- Ensure you and your family knows your surroundings and risk for specific weather events.
- Have an emergency plan, and know what to do before severe weather strikes. Post your plan in your home where family and friends who visit can see it.
- Identify an appropriate shelter in your home, neighborhood and community ahead of time. Share this with your neighbor.
- Learn how to strengthen your home and business against severe weather. Pass this on at a community gathering or faith-based meeting.
- Find out from local government emergency management how you will be notified for each kind of disaster and sign up for additional alerts through social media and local news. Understand these local warning systems and signals and share your knowledge with your coworkers and friends. Email these resources to your friends, post to your social media account.
- Remember, once you have taken action; share your story with your family and friends.
- Text your love ones and let them know you are safe and where you are.

Learn more at [www.weather.gov](http://www.weather.gov) and [www.ready.gov/severe-weather](http://www.ready.gov/severe-weather) or the Spanish-language web site [www.listo.gov](http://www.listo.gov). Follow the National Weather Service [@nws](https://twitter.com/nws) and FEMA [@readygov](https://twitter.com/readygov).

# Blog Post Template

Posted by:



## Be a Force of Nature: Take the Next Step during National Severe Weather Preparedness Week

*<Customize this blog post by including your own severe weather story here. Write about your experiences with storms/tornadoes or recent severe weather in your home town.>*

This year, I am taking the time to learn how to prepare for severe weather during [National Severe Weather Preparedness Week](#), March 2-8, 2014, sponsored by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).

Being prepared to act quickly could be a matter of survival. This is especially evident during the threat of severe weather. The deadliest and most destructive tornado of 2013, an EF-5 on May 20 in Moore, Oklahoma and caused more than \$2 billion in property damage. Even though severe weather was anticipated days in advance, many in the impacted areas said they did not have a plan and were caught unprepared.

While spring tends to produce more tornadoes, they're not uncommon in fall. On Nov. 17, a late season tornado outbreak that struck seven Midwestern states became the most active tornado day of 2013 with a total of 74 tornadoes.

Being prepared to act quickly could be a matter of survival. This is especially evident during the threat of severe weather. The Moore Oklahoma EF 5 tornado is estimated to have caused about \$2 billion in property damage. In November 2013 alone, at least 70 tornadoes spanned seven Midwestern states.

Severe weather could happen at any time, anywhere. Even though the Oklahoma tornado outbreak was forecasted for days in advance, and warning lead times for the tornado outbreak averaged nearly 20 minutes, there were still many people in the impacted areas that stated they were unprepared.

### ***Here is what we can do to prepare:***

Knowing your risk, taking action and being an example by sharing your knowledge and actions with your social network are just a few steps you can take to be better prepared and save your life and others.

**Know Your Risk:** Hurricanes, tornadoes, storms - every state in the United States experiences severe weather. Visit [weather.gov](http://weather.gov) to get the latest on weather threats.

**Take Action:** Take the next step in severe weather preparedness by creating a [family communications plan](#), putting an [emergency kit](#) together, keeping important papers and valuables in a safe place, and learning about [Wireless Emergency Alerts](#). To learn more about taking action, participate in a local event on April 30 through America's [PrepareAthon](#).

Learn more at [www.weather.gov](http://www.weather.gov) and [www.ready.gov/severe-weather](http://www.ready.gov/severe-weather) or the Spanish-language web site [www.listo.gov](http://www.listo.gov). Follow the National Weather Service @nws and FEMA @readygov.

# Op-Ed

## SAMPLE OP-ED



## Be a Force of Nature in Your Hometown

*National Severe Weather Preparedness Week March 2-8, 2014*

Severe weather could happen anytime. In May 2013, tornadoes devastated part of central Oklahoma. This outbreak included the deadliest tornado of the year on May 19 in Moore, Oklahoma. In just one month, November 2013, at least 70 tornadoes spanned seven Midwestern states.

Each year, people suffer or are seriously injured by severe weather despite advance warning. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) have partnered for the third year to highlight the importance of making severe weather preparedness a nationwide priority.

We all want the peace of mind of knowing that our families, friends, homes and our businesses are safe and protected from threats of any kind. And while we can't control where or when the next disaster will hit, we can take action by preparing ourselves and loved ones for emergencies and learning what actions to take.

Knowing your risk, taking action and being an example are just a few steps you could take to be better prepared to save your life and others.

**Know your risk:** The first step to becoming weather-ready is to understand the type of hazardous weather that can affect where you live and work, and how the weather could impact you and your family. During active weather, stay alert of the forecast by listening to radio or television, check the weather forecast regularly on [weather.gov](http://weather.gov), obtain a [NOAA Weather Radio](#) and listen for [Wireless Emergency Alerts \(WEA\)](#) on your cell phone. Severe weather comes in many forms and your shelter plan should include all types of local hazards.

**Take action:** Develop an [emergency plan](#) based on your local weather hazards and practice how and where to take shelter before a severe weather event. Post your plan in your home where visitors can see it. Learn how to strengthen your home and business against severe weather. Take action and participate in a local event on April 30 through America's [PrepareAthon](#) and ensure you know what to do when severe weather occurs

**Be a Force of Nature:** Once you have taken action, tell your family, friends, school staff and co-workers about how they can prepare. Share the resources and alert systems you discovered through your social media network. Studies show that individuals need to receive messages a number of ways before acting – be one of those sources.

Learn more at [www.weather.gov](http://www.weather.gov) and [www.ready.gov/severe-weather](http://www.ready.gov/severe-weather) or the Spanish-language web site [www.listo.gov](http://www.listo.gov). Follow the National Weather Service [@nws](https://twitter.com/nws) and FEMA [@readygov](https://twitter.com/readygov).

# Social Media Toolkit

*National Severe Weather Preparedness Week March 2-8, 2014*

You, too, could be a force of nature in your community by joining the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) to use social media to promote National Severe Weather Preparedness Week.

Being prepared for severe weather is about more than just protecting your family – it's about being an example in your community. It means sharing weather alerts, preparedness tips and other information to save the lives of others.

Research shows that many people do not act when they hear the first tornado siren. They wait for confirmation from their friends or family. Some do not take action until they see that others are doing so.

Help your friends and community by spreading the word during National Severe Weather Preparedness Week and share the tools to help everyone learn what is necessary to be prepared.

Use these widgets, banners and tweets to let your friends and family know the importance of preparing for severe weather.

Follow:

#BeAForce

@Readygov

@FEMA

@NOAA

@PrepareAthon

More tips and information check out:

[www.Ready.gov](http://www.Ready.gov)

[www.fema.gov](http://www.fema.gov)

[www.weather.gov](http://www.weather.gov)

[www.noaa.gov](http://www.noaa.gov)

[www.ready.gov/prepare](http://www.ready.gov/prepare)

## Twitter:

Tag posts to promote Severe Weather Preparedness Week with **#BeAForce** to promote the week.

## Below are sample tweets or social media messages:

### Sunday, March 2<sup>nd</sup>-National Severe Weather Preparedness Week Launch

#### Twitter

It's National Severe Weather Preparedness Week! [#BeAForce](#) and share preparedness tips: <http://go.usa.gov/ZjYT>

Severe weather strikes any time of the year. Are you prepared? Follow [@Readygov](#): [www.ready.gov/severe-weather](http://www.ready.gov/severe-weather) [#BeAForce](#)

Being prepared to act quickly during severe weather can save your life!  
[www.ready.gov/severe-weather](http://www.ready.gov/severe-weather) [#BeAForce](#)

For tips and tools to promote National Severe Weather Preparedness Week visit:  
<http://go.usa.gov/ZjYT> [#BeAForce](#)

#### Facebook

It's National Severe Weather Preparedness Week! Join us in sharing severe weather safety tips all week long with your friends. Check out how at [www.Ready.gov/severe-weather](http://www.Ready.gov/severe-weather). And if you're on Twitter, follow the conversation & safety tips all week long at [#BeAForce](#)

### Monday, March 3<sup>rd</sup> Know your Severe Weather Risk

Severe weather impacts every part of the country. How does it affect your family?  
[www.nws.noaa.gov/com/weatherreadynation/force.html#.Uuaxefso7IU](http://www.nws.noaa.gov/com/weatherreadynation/force.html#.Uuaxefso7IU) [#BeAForce](#)

Talk with your kids about severe weather. Know the facts:  
<http://www.ready.gov/kids/know-the-facts> [#BeAForce](#)

Tornado Terms: Watch= tornadoes are possible. Warning= A tornado has been sighted. Take shelter immediately. [#BeAForce](#)

Join [@PrepareAthon](#) & take action! Talk with your family about hazards in your community: [www.fema.gov/preparethon](http://www.fema.gov/preparethon) [#BeAForce](#)

Know your risk of severe weather. Bookmark [www.weather.gov](http://www.weather.gov) and #BeAForce of nature

## Facebook

Severe weather impacts every part of the country. One of the best ways to prepare is to know the hazards for your area. [www.Ready.gov/today](http://www.Ready.gov/today) is a great place to start – just click on your state to learn more!

Join America's PrepareAthon and take action to prepare for the severe weather hazards in your area. More at [www.Ready.gov/prepare](http://www.Ready.gov/prepare)

## Tuesday, March 4<sup>th</sup> Build an Emergency Kit

### Twitter

ATMs & credit card machines may not work during a power outage; keep cash (small bills) in your emergency kit. #BeAForce

Pack an emergency kit for each person and pet traveling in your car: [www.ready.gov/cars](http://www.ready.gov/cars) #BeAForce

Building an emergency kit is easy. Start with items in your house: flashlight, water, & canned foods: <http://www.ready.gov/basic-disaster-supplies-kit> #BeAForce

Don't forget to prep your pets before an emergency. Tips: [www.ready.gov/animals](http://www.ready.gov/animals) #BeAForce

### Facebook

Making an emergency kit is easy – here's a 30 second video showing key emergency supplies to keep in your vehicle: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s3AnY14HRlI>. It's a great idea to keep a similar kit at home and at your office – [www.Ready.gov/build-a-kit](http://www.Ready.gov/build-a-kit) has a full list!

## Wednesday, March 5<sup>th</sup> Make an Emergency Plan

### Twitter

How will you get in touch with your family during an emergency? Ideas: text, e-mail, and/or post on social media. #BeAForce

Winging it is not a family emergency plan. Make a disaster plan with your kids: [www.ready.gov/kids](http://www.ready.gov/kids) #BeAForce

Have you memorized your emergency contacts? Print & keep a copy on you:  
<http://www.fema.gov/media-library/assets/documents/34330> #BeAForce

Know what to do before severe #wx strikes – create an emergency plan today  
[www.ready.gov/make-a-plan](http://www.ready.gov/make-a-plan) #BeAForce

## Facebook

(Attach YouTube link: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p7mHV3eI2g0>) Winging it is not an emergency plan. Make a disaster plan with your kids at [www.Ready.gov/kids](http://www.Ready.gov/kids)

## Thursday, March 6<sup>th</sup> Emergency Alert Warnings

### Twitter

Follow @nws for the latest weather alerts, warnings and news #BeAForce

If you receive a Wireless Emergency Alert, take action & check local media for more info. #BeAForce

Wireless Emergency Alerts are automatic texts sent to you in an emergency; no sign-up required: [ready.gov/alerts](http://ready.gov/alerts)

What are [Wireless Emergency Alerts](#) - Learn more from @NOAA  
<http://www.nws.noaa.gov/com/weatherreadynation/wea.html> #BeAForce

.@NOAAWeather Radios broadcast warnings, watches, forecasts and other hazard information 24 hours a day, 7 days a week <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/nwr/> #BeAForce

Be prepared: hear the warning with a @NOAA Weather Radio  
<http://www.nws.noaa.gov/nwr/> #BeAForce

Find out how you can get a @NOAA Weather Radio <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/nwr/>  
#BeAForce

### Facebook

What are Wireless Emergency Alerts? Learn more from our partners @NOAA and share with your Facebook friends! (Attach link:  
<http://www.nws.noaa.gov/com/weatherreadynation/wea.html>)

## Friday, March 7<sup>th</sup> Be a Force of Nature- Take Action

### Twitter

Severe #WX Tips: Only travel if necessary, keep phones charged, check on neighbors, and bring pets indoors. #BeAForce

Sign-up for Twitter Alerts from @FEMA for critical information in real-time  
<https://twitter.com/fema/alerts> #BeAForce

Like @NWS on Facebook and share your severe weather story  
<https://www.facebook.com/NWS> #BeAForce

Increase emergency preparedness in your neighborhood by joining America's PrepareAthon! @PrepareAthon <http://1.usa.gov/18dXSHu>

Families/communities/ businesses: #BeAForce of nature & prepare for severe #wx now  
<http://www.ready.gov/business>

## Facebook

Take action to increase emergency preparedness in your neighborhood. Join America's PrepareAthon at [www.Ready.gov/prepare](http://www.Ready.gov/prepare) and spread the word!

## Saturday, March 8<sup>th</sup> Summary

### Twitter

Visit [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov) year-round for helpful emergency preparedness tips. #BeAForce

Bookmark [www.weather.gov](http://www.weather.gov) for the latest weather forecasts and warnings. #BeAForce

Find out your state's severe weather awareness week  
<http://www.nws.noaa.gov/om/severeweather/severewxcal.shtml> #BeAForce

Coming soon: Flood Safety Awareness Week, March 18-22  
<http://www.floodsafety.noaa.gov/> #BeAForce

Tornado season is different in FL than in NY. Learn your state's severe weather preparedness week <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/om/severeweather/severewxcal.shtml>  
#BeAForce

Help your friends get ready for severe weather [www.ready.gov/severe-weather](http://www.ready.gov/severe-weather)  
#BeAForce

National Severe Weather Preparedness Week is over – but the need to prepare is not  
[www.ready.gov/severe-weather](http://www.ready.gov/severe-weather) #BeAForce

Join us on April 30 for [America's PrepareAthon](#) and practice what you've learned all week <http://www.fema.gov/prepareathon> #PrepareAthon #BeAForce

Know your risk, take action and be an example. Share what you have done with friends, family, coworkers and others #BeAForce