

Media Advisory

Office of Macomb County Executive
Mark A. Hackel



For Immediate Release

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Severe Weather Awareness Week - March 27th to April 2nd

Mt. Clemens, Michigan --- Macomb County Executive Mark Hackel reminds residents March 27 - April 2 is Severe Weather Awareness Week. "This is a good time for families, businesses and schools to develop their own severe weather plans," said Executive Hackel. Our Emergency Management and Health Departments have many planning materials to be prepared for an emergency." Macomb County's Outdoor Warning siren system is tested the first Saturday of every month.

According to the National Weather Service, The strongest tornado in Macomb County since 1950 occurred on May 8, 1964. This tornado was categorized as an F4 (out of 5) , and it moved from 3 miles north of Mt. Clemens, across far southern St. Clair county just north of Algonac, then into Ontario. 11 persons were killed and 224 injured in Macomb County, with 132 houses destroyed and 240 houses and other buildings damaged in the tornado's path. The tornado had a mean width of around 1/2-mile.

Two F3 tornadoes have occurred in Macomb County, one on March 20, 1976, and the other on May 2, 1983. The tornado on 3/20/76 resulted in one death and 3 injuries, with the tornado moving from just east of Macomb to 5 miles northwest of Richmond. 6 homes, 14 outbuildings, an aircraft hangar, and 2 utility towers were either damaged or destroyed from the tornado. On 5/2/83, a tornado moved from East Detroit, across Harsens Island in St. Clair County, and into Ontario. Though there were no injuries reported in Macomb County from this tornado, damage was over \$5 million

Since 2008, there has been an average per year of 96.5 storm-based warnings issued and 221.5 severe weather events in southeast Michigan, according to data from the National Weather Service office. A watch means conditions are right for severe weather and residents should remain alert for approaching storms. A warning means severe weather has been sighted or detected by weather radar. If a warning is issued and/or the sky becomes threatening, residents are advised to move to a place of safety. Some valuable tips to remember in case of a tornado include:

- 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 or hallway on the lowest floor and get under a sturdy piece of furniture
- Stay away from windows
- Get out of automobiles
- Do not try to outrun a tornado in your car; instead leave it immediately
- If caught outside or in a vehicle lie flat in a nearby ditch or depression
- Mobile homes, even if tied down, offer little protection from tornadoes and should be abandoned

For additional information on Severe Weather Awareness Week, or for help developing severe weather plans, visit <http://www.weather.gov/> or contact Macomb County Office of Emergency Management at 586-469-5270.