



Tales of the I.C.E. Man

I.C.E. - In Case of Emergency

Volume 5, Issue 4 – May 2011

May is Severe Weather Awareness Month

The National Weather Service (NWS) offices in the Pacific Northwest will be conducting their annual Severe Weather Awareness Campaign from May 1-7 to help educate the public on severe weather hazards. During this special week, they will be issuing special daily Public Information Statements about severe weather by highlighting a different topic each day. The following subjects will be covered during the campaign

- Sunday:** Kick off Day
- Monday:** Flood and Flash Flood Safety
- Tuesday:** Tornadoes, Waterspouts and Tornado Safety
- Wednesday:** Wind, Hail, & Lightning Safety
- Thursday:** Wildfire Awareness
- Friday:** NWS Watch and Warning Program
- Saturday:** NOAA Weather Radio

Review each day's weather topic at:

<http://www.wrh.noaa.gov/pqr/seasonal/severeawareweek.php>

Take "5" to Survive –

If you find it difficult to set aside time to prepare for emergencies, you're not alone. This year get prepared in small steps. Here are a few easy 5-minute projects:

- **Check the clothing in your 72-hour kit.** Spring is here (well almost) do you need to adjust for the season or for growing children?
- **Stored Water** - When was the last time you changed your water. Red Cross suggests every 6 months.
- **Go-Kit for your car.** If the high gas prices allow you to get on the road, you will want to make sure you are prepared with extra water, food, flashlight, and other goodies, etc.
- **High water on the roadway?** Do you know when to turn around? If not, check out Monday's National Weather Service page on Flash Flood Safety.
- Take a look at the attached weather facts. Know when to stay home.

We All need to be **Ready, Willing, and Able** when the time comes to take care of ourselves and our families.

Severe Weather – We are not immune

With the tornadoes ripping up the South and SouthEast, it is easy to become complacent and think, "Boy, I am glad we live in the NorthWest where those kinds of storms don't occur. While the tornadoes that hit here may not be a mile in diameter, blasting over several miles of territory, we do get some every now and then. Just remember Aumsville last December, or the tornado that ripped up parts of Vancouver, in January 2008. Here are the things to remember:

If a Tornado Warning is issued for your area, or if threatening weather is approaching, remember the following safety rules:

In Homes or Small Buildings: 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.

If you are caught outdoors, seek shelter in a basement, shelter or sturdy building.

If you cannot quickly walk to a shelter, and are close to a car:

- Immediately get into a vehicle, buckle your seat belt and try to drive to the closest sturdy shelter.
- If flying debris hits your vehicle while you are driving, pull over and park.
- **As a last resort:**
 - Stay in the car with your seatbelt fastened. Put your head down below the windows, covering with your hands and a blanket if possible.
 - If you can **safely** get noticeably lower than the level of the roadway, exit your car and lie in that area, covering your head with your hands.

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It is Always easier to Prepare than to Repair.

Good Links

Learn more about **Amateur Radio** - [ARRL](http://www.arrl.org) or **Washington County** [ARES](http://www.washingtoncountyares.org)
[National Weather Service - Portland](http://www.nws.gov)
[Ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov)
[Weather Alerts to your mobile phone](http://www.weatheralerts.com)

Windstorms and Tornadoes

Most types of severe weather have the potential for generating dangerous winds any time of the year. In some cases, they may even spawn tornadoes. Windstorms and tornadoes are a serious threat in most parts of the country, even here in the Northwest.

The Pacific Northwest has experienced many violent windstorms, including: the Columbus Day Storm (1962), the November 1981 Windstorm, the Inaugural Day Storm (1993), the Windstorm of December 1995, the December 2007 storms, and the tornado that hit Vancouver WA in January 2008.

Common items, such as cans, bottles, signs, trees, glass, roof shingles, lawn furniture, and toys, can become flying debris, or “projectiles,” in high winds. They frequently cause severe property damage as well as major injuries and even death.

The extent of damage that a storm may cause is based on its wind speed.



WIND SPEED (MPH)

WIND EFFECTS

25 – 31	Large branches will be in motion.
32 – 38	Whole trees in motion; inconvenience felt walking against the wind.
39 – 54	Twigs and small branches may break off of trees; wind generally impedes progress when walking; high profile vehicles such as trucks and motor homes may be difficult to control.
55 – 74	Potential damage to TV antennas; may push over shallow rooted trees especially if the soil is saturated.
74 – 95	Potential for minimal structural damage, particularly to unanchored mobile homes; power lines, signs, and tree branches may be blown down.
96 – 110	Moderate structural damage to walls, roofs and windows; large signs and tree branches blown down; moving vehicles pushed off roads.
111 – 130	Extensive structural damage to walls, roofs. Homes may be destroyed.
131 – 155	Extreme damage to structures and roofs; trees uprooted or snapped.

BEFORE HIGH WINDS OCCUR

- Identify a shelter or safe area in your home, away from windows, that will provide you with maximum protection.
- Locate utility shutoff locations and show family members how to turn them off when necessary.
- Identify items that must be secured or brought inside during high winds and severe weather.
- Discuss what to do in case the power goes out or someone gets injured.
- Assemble an emergency kit. Be sure to include flashlights, a battery-powered radio, extra batteries, and a manual can opener.
- Keep some non-perishable packaged or canned food on hand.

WHEN HIGH WINDS HAVE BEEN FORECAST

- Fill family vehicles with fuel.
- Anchor outdoor objects that can blow away (such as garbage cans, hanging plants, and lawn furniture) or move them inside.

DURING HIGH WINDS

- Stay indoors and away from windows.
- Do not drive.**
- Stay away from downed power lines.
- Stay tuned to a local radio or TV station

Stay away from Down Power lines. You can get a serious or fatal electrical shock simply by getting close to them. Stay back and call PGE 503-228-6322 or 800-542-8818

Tornadoes Do Occur Locally, Really. FACTS You Should Know:

Tornadoes do strike here in the Northwest. In January 2008 an EF1 twister roared through Vancouver WA causing extensive damage. Other tornadoes that have struck in the Northwest in recent years include a twister that struck near Lebanon in September 2007 and another that hit near Silverton in 1997.

Tornadoes travel at an average speed of 30 mph, but have been known to reach speeds of 70 mph, (**Don't try to outrun one**) and can generate winds of over 200 mph. While most tornado damage is caused by violent winds, tornado injuries and deaths typically result from flying debris.

During severe weather or a Tornado Watch, BE OBSERVANT:

- Severe thunderstorms; dark, often greenish-colored skies; large hail, 3/4-inch in diameter or more; and a loud roar similar to a train may be indications of a developing or approaching tornado.
- If you see a tornado or any of these indicators, take the actions noted below.

If a Tornado Warning is issued, TAKE ACTION IMMEDIATELY:

- Go to a basement or an interior part of the lowest level of the building you are in.
- Stay away from windows, doors, and outside walls.
- In most cases, closets, bathrooms (without windows), and interior hallways work best.
- Get under something sturdy - lie face down, draw your knees up under you and cover the back of your head with your hands.
- If you are outside - lie down flat in the nearest ditch or ravine.



Avoid driving when high winds are predicted or present.

High winds can easily push a car out of its lane of travel or off the road. The larger the vehicle, the more susceptible it will be to the force of the wind.

If you are driving when high winds occur, pull safely off of the road and seek shelter in a building. Being in a parked car is safer than being outside; however, being in a building is safer than being in a car.

During and after periods of high winds, be cautious of debris in the roadway and downed or low-hanging utility wires.

If a power line falls across your vehicle, **DON'T GET OUT!** Wait for emergency help to arrive. If you see a power line on the ground, **DO NOT TOUCH** it with anything. Expect every power line to be "live."

For the latest weather information, tune to your local radio or TV station. Listening to a NOAA weather radio station will also provide current and forecast weather information. The National Weather Service operates these "radio stations" and provides listeners with continuous updates 24 hours-a-day.

A weather **WATCH** means that atmospheric conditions are right for severe weather.

A weather **WARNING** means that severe weather has been observed or is imminent in the area specified.

KEEP AN EYE ON THE WEATHER

Weather Website: <http://nimbo.wrh.noaa.gov/portland>

Information Courtesy of the City of Hillsboro - Emergency Management (503) 681-6412

<http://www.ci.hillsboro.or.us/EmergencyInfo/>