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FEATURE

Tornado Outbreak!

"Leap Day" Tornado Outbreak

Shelby County was fortunate to escape the recent deadly tornado outbreak.

The National Weather Service issued numerous watches and warnings several days before these two significant storm systems formed. These killer tornadoes ravaged several states from February 28 through March 2. A total of 45 tornadoes were reported, with 13 of them rated as EF3 and one rated as an EF4.



The twisters leveled towns, downed trees, and destroyed homes and businesses in Tennessee, Kentucky, Indiana, West Virginia, Florida, Missouri, Alabama, Georgia, Ohio, North Carolina, and Kansas. And the death toll continues to rise as thousands are left without electrical power.

Even though we cannot control or contain the weather and its unpredictable course, we can learn how to survive even the most dangerous events.

Always stay on top of the forecast.

Have a NOAA weather radio with a tone alert, ALERT FM, or TV with you and heed the watches and warnings.

Plan ahead where your "safe room" is at home and work. This should be on the lowest floor in the center of the building.

Have "go kit" with you at all times, and especially stored in your safe room, with enough supplies to sustain you and your family and pets for at least seven days.

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Meet with your family and business associates to decide where you will meet if separated.

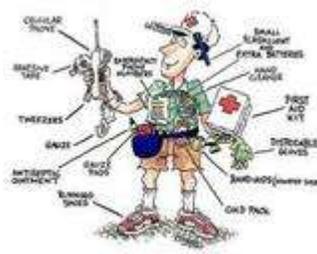
And most of all, look out for your senior and special needs neighbors. Let them know you will help them in times of need.

Photo Caption: Bob Nations, Jr., Director, Shelby County Office of Preparedness

OTHER STORIES

Preparedness Challenge!

The Shelby County Office of Preparedness HLS / EMA is issuing **Preparedness Challenge 2012!**



The challenge, if you choose to accept it, is to use your personal experience and creativity during past disasters to help others become more prepared.

Submit your original idea to improve personal, business, faith-based, or community preparedness in 200 words or less by emailing citizencorps@shelbycountyttn.gov. Deadline is March 31, 2012.

The agency will choose a first, second and third place winner. The winning ideas will be posted on the agency web sites. First place will be awarded an ALERT FM receiver, a CERT disaster kit, FEMA coloring books, a "Duck, Cover and Hold" poster, a FEMA DVD, and the "Are You Ready?" FEMA book. Second place will receive an ALERT FM and a CERT kit, and third place will receive a CERT kit.

Don't delay, take the Preparedness Challenge today!

Spring Forward

Daylight Savings Time (DST) begins Sunday, **March 11 at 2:00 a.m.** as we move our clocks ahead one hour.

The Shelby County Office of Preparedness reminds citizens on this day to change the batteries in their



smoke alarms and test them. DST is also a great time to meet with family and business associates to review the four steps to preparedness:

- 1. Know your risks** by learning what can happen here such as earthquakes, severe weather, flooding, power outages, hazardous materials releases, major fires and terrorism.
- 2. Create a "go kit"** for home work and auto with enough supplies to sustain you and your pets for at least seven days.
- 3. Make a plan** for every threat. Decide where you will meet outside the home and elsewhere in the community if separated. Designate an out of town relative everyone can contact. Program ICE (in case of emergency) in your cell phones.
- 4. Stay informed** by having a NOAA weather radio with a tone alert and battery back-up, TV, or ALERT FM at home work and auto. Learn the locations of the outdoor warning sirens.

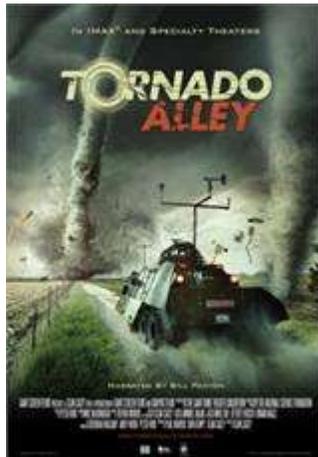
Remember, review your preparedness plans twice a year as we "spring forward" or "fall back."

Tornado Alley!

Experience Deadly Tornadoes at the Pink Palace

Saturday March 3 was the opening day for, "**Tornado Alley**," at the Pink Palace Imax Theatre.

Make your reservations now to see this exciting film that tracks a group of "storm chasers" as they search for the origins and evolution of tornadoes. You will experience the full force of tornadoes and their deadly destructive power.



The film is sponsored by Cummins, Methodist LeBonheur Healthcare and TSW Storm Shelters.

For more information, showtimes and prices, please visit www.memphismuseums.org.

Ham Radio Training

Technician and General Class License Training

Technician level training began February 23 and will be held each Thursday for 10 weeks, from 6:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m. Students will be instructed on the basics of Ham radio with the goal to achieve a "Technician" license. The location is the American Red Cross Building, 1400 Central Avenue, Memphis, Tennessee 38104.



General level training will begin on March 14 each Wednesday for 10 weeks, from 6:00 p.m. - 9:00 pm. Students who have achieved the Technician license and want to advance to the next level are welcome to attend this class. The location is 2668 Avery, Shelby County Emergency Operations Center.

There is a \$40 charge for the class that includes the required study manual and other printed materials. The class is limited to 40 students and pre-registration and pre-payment are required. Please call or email instructor, Alexander "Ham" Hilliard, to register at 901.386.7184 or email hamh@bellsouth.net.

Arlington Seniors Prepare

Arlington senior citizens were delighted to visit with representatives from the Shelby County Office of Preparedness on February 22 during their weekly lunch meeting.



Those attending this special presentation learned how to get prepared for disasters that may happen in their area, what to put in a disaster or "go" kit, how to create a communications plan, and the importance of looking out for each other.

A "go kit" was part of "show and tell" during the presentation. Many in the audience were encouraged that they already had many of the ingredients needed to create their own kit. The group plans more meetings with their neighbors to discuss preparedness.

Photo Caption: John Russell, leader of the Arlington seniors, sitting far right, and other seniors.

Flood Safety

Flood Safety Awareness Week



Those living in Shelby County remember all too well the 2011 historic "flood of the century" that displaced hundreds of citizens as the Mississippi River and other waterways rose and slipped over their banks. It was a stark reminder that major flooding can happen anywhere, any time.

The Shelby County Office of Preparedness reminds citizens to prepare for flooding during "**Flood Safety Awareness Week, March 12 - 16.**"

Know the terms associated with flooding.

A **flash flood watch** or **flood watch** means that it is possible in your area. A **flash flood warning** or **flood warning** means that the flooding will occur in your area and to take shelter on higher ground.

To stay safe, follow these safety tips:

- Listen to NOAA weather radio, TV, or ALERT FM and follow their instructions.
- Make a plan with family members and business associates where you will meet if separated.
- Obtain flood insurance through the National Flood Insurance Program for your home and business ahead of time. Visit www.floodsmart.gov to find an agent near you.
- Have a "go kit" with enough supplies to sustain you and your pets for at least 7 days.
- Be prepared at a moment's notice to evacuate or shelter-in-place.
- Remember when driving on a flooded road, to "Turn Around. Don't Drown!"
- Keep children and pets out of flood waters. They lack judgment about fast flowing water or contaminated water.
- Be mindful of night time flooding when it is harder to judge the depth of the water.
- Discard items that have come in contact with flood waters. Remember, "When in doubt, throw it out!"

Communications Drill

The Shelby County Office of Preparedness participated in a "communications exercise" on Thursday, February 23 from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. during **Tennessee's Severe Weather Awareness Week - February 19 - 25.**



The exercise gave the agency a chance to test their communications protocols and capabilities between state and local emergency responders, amateur "ham" radio operators, healthcare providers, the Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT), the Shelby County Health Department, and other participating agencies. Satellite radios, phones, and ham radios were tested for effectiveness and interoperability.

Photo Caption: Communications Officer, Keith Butler, at the controls in the Dispatch area of the Shelby County Emergency Operations Center.

Raleigh Outreach

The Blueridge Neighborhood Association in the Raleigh / Bartlett area learned how to "get ready" for unexpected events during their February monthly meeting.



Lead by resident Jerry Michnewicz, the group gathers monthly at the Gloria Dei Lutheran Church on Raleigh LaGrange Road to listen to interesting speakers, share community concerns, and enjoy fellowship. Most who attended have lived in their neighborhood for several years and have formed a close bond.

Many of those who attended agreed that being a "good neighbor" and looking out for one another was key to surviving a disaster.

Several from this neighborhood plan to take the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training in the near future.

Photo Caption: Members of the Blueridge Neighborhood Association pick up FEMA preparedness brochures and handouts from the Office of Preparedness after their meeting.

SKYWARN

Weather Spotters Classes

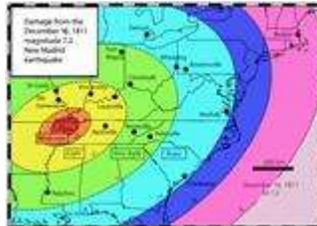
The public is invited to learn about weather and how to support the National Weather Service in Memphis by reporting tornadoes, flooding, hail, snow, and subsequent damages. The SKYWARN "Weather Spotters" classes will be held at the following locations and times. The classes are free.



- **March 9, 2012, 7:00 p.m.**, Agricenter, International, 777 Walnut Grove, Wing C, Banquet Room, Contact Jim Branda at 901.544.0401
- **March 27, 2012, 6:45 p.m.**, Baptist Women's Hospital, 6225 Humphreys Blvd, ARES Group, Contact Dean Eicher at 901.605.9544.

New Madrid Commemoration

The public is invited to attend the "**200th Year Commemoration of the New Madrid Earthquakes of 1811 - 1812**" on Friday, March 9, 2012 at 8:00 a.m. at the University Center at the University of Memphis.



The event is sponsored by the West Tennessee Seismic Safety Commission and Mid-South VOAD, in collaboration with the Shelby County Office of Preparedness, the Tennessee Emergency Management Agency and the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

Guest speakers include **Ham Hilliard**, Amateur Radio Operator and Instructor, **Gary Patterson**, Director of Education and Outreach University of Memphis Center for Earthquake Research and Information (CERI), **Kellie Bentz**, Director of Disaster Services, Hands On Network National Headquarters, **Linda Daily**, Director 2-1-1 and Global Disaster Response United Way Worldwide, **Christy Smith**, National Consultant Disaster Response USA, UMCOR and **Doug Watson**, Business Manager and Director of Special Projects Lab Four Career Training and Institute.

Registration and parking are free. Breakfast and lunch will be provided. To reserve your place, call 901.433.4335 or write to midsouthvoad@gmail.com.

Citizen Corps is 10!

FEMA Celebrates Decade-long Anniversary of Citizen Corps



The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) proudly announced the 10 year anniversary of Citizen Corps.

The movement of training volunteers to assist government agencies before, during and after disasters began as a result of the terrorists attacks of 911.

In 2002, Citizen Corps was created with its mission to harness the energy, talent, and creativity of volunteers to make a difference in communities throughout America - with the shared goal of preparedness and resiliency.

Programs under the umbrella agency of Citizen Corps include USAonWatch (neighborhood watch), Volunteers in Police Services (VIPS), Fire Corps, Medical Reserve Corps, Power Squadrons, and Community Emergency Response Team (CERT).

There are currently 1100 Citizen Corps councils in the United States - all working tirelessly to direct their programs for maximum effectiveness.

The Shelby County Citizen Corps Council, under the leadership of Kimberlyn Boulter, meets monthly to coordinate their programs. Members of the council include volunteers and representatives from Shelby County government, Germantown, Bartlett, Collierville, Millington, Arlington, and Memphis.

To find out more about Shelby County Citizen Corps and the programs offered, please email citizencorps@shelbycountyttn.gov.

CERT

Free "Disaster Preparedness" Training

Shelby County Citizen Corps is offering free disaster preparedness instruction through the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training. The classes are open to anyone living in



Shelby County.

Modules include lectures, powerpoint, videos and "hands-on" training on the subjects of fire suppression, medical triage and first-aid, team organization, disaster psychology, terrorism, light search and rescue, hazardous materials, and disaster preparation.

Open CERT classes:

Shelby County Office of Preparedness CERT: March 17 and 24, To pre-register contact Eugene Jones at 901.515.2525

Collierville CERT: April 13, 14, 21 and May 4,5,6. To pre-register contact Lee Race at lrace@ci.collierville.tn.us

Bartlett CERT; March 17 and 24. To pre-register call 901.385.5536.

Germantown CERT: March 30 and 31. To pre-register email srhea@germantown-tn.gov

Students who graduate from the course receive a CERT identification card and a 2 year certificate.

For more information on CERT and other Shelby County Citizen Corps programs, please email citizencorps@shelbycountyttn.gov.

Photo Caption: Regina Shipp, CERT student at the Shelby County Emergency Operations Center, learns how to "surround and drown" while overhauling a fire.

Preparedness Question

Where is the safest place to be during a "tornado warning?"



Answer:

Inside: Go to the lowest floor of the building, the most interior room. This may be a basement, under a stairway, an interior closet or a bathroom. Move away from windows. Have a disaster kit in this room with a NOAA weather radio, metal whistle, blankets and pillow. **Outside:** Move into a sturdy building immediately. If no is building available, lie flat in a ditch and cover your head with your hands. **In a vehicle:** Get out and lie flat in a ditch and cover your head with your hands.



Preparedness Resources

NOAA's National Weather Service Storm Prediction Center web site:
www.spc.noaa.gov

Shelby County Office of Preparedness web site:
www.staysafeshelby.us

Shelby County Citizen Corps: email citizencorps@shelbycountyttn.gov

Shelby County, Tennessee web site:
www.shelbycountyttn.gov

Shelby County Emergency Management Agency web site:
www.mscema.org

Ready Shelby web site: www.readyshelby.us

ALERT FM web site: www.alertfm.com

Memphis Light Gas and Water web site and phone:
www.mlgw.com, 901.544.6549

Central United States Earthquake Consortium web site:
www.cusec.org.

United States Geological Society (USGS) web site:
usgs.gov

National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) web site:
www.nfpa.org

Center for Earthquake Research and Information (CERI) web site:
www.ceri.memphis.edu

Citizen Corps web site: www.citizencorps.org

American Radio Relay League (ARRL) web site:
www.arrl.org

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) web site:
www.fema.org

Ready America web site: www.ready.gov

National Weather Service web site: www.nws.noaa.org

Department of Homeland Security (DHS) web site:
www.dhs.gov

National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) web site:
www.floodsmart.gov



Emergency: call 911

Know Your Risks

Shelby County Office of Preparedness HLS/EMA

Bob Nations, Jr., Director

Homeland Security - 901.379.7094

Emergency Management Agency - 901.515.2525

<http://www.staysafeshelby.us/>

Get a Kit

Make a Plan

Stay Informed

