

Mid-County Fire Protection District

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Mid-County Plans Open Houses at

Have you ever wondered what goes on at a fire station? Did you ever want to sit in a fire truck and turn on the lights?

Well, now's your chance! Mid-County Fire District will be holding open houses at their stations over the next few weeks. Stop by and visit with the volunteers and staff and take a look around.

Dates for the Open Houses are as follows:

- Mar. 14 – Station 4, Montreal
- Mar. 21 – Station 3, Roach
- Mar. 28 – Station 2, Greenview
- Apr. 4 – Station 1, Camdenton

Join us for fun, food and fellowship at one or all of the stations. The open houses will run 12 -3 p.m. If you are unsure of the location, call 346-2049 for directions. Hope to see you there!

Weathering the storms by Denise Russell

Emergency Management Director



As storm season approaches, I thought it prudent to refresh everyone's mind about storm season. The Ozarks storm season can be as kind as it can be violent. Now is the time of year when everyone should break out the weather radio, dust it off, give it fresh back-up batteries, turn it on – and leave it on!

This last year proved a challenge in terms of storm prediction both for the NWS and for emergency management staff. We experienced storms that produced two EF-1 tornadoes in severe and tornadic activity instantly. The more often we experience these storm trends, the more urgent the need for pre-event preparedness. Have a plan that requires no last minute thought, only action.

Gather the supplies, put them in the car, by the basement door, in the basement or shelter area.

Do not rely on the sirens to tell you the tornado is coming, it may already be here. Pay heed to the watches that are activated in this area; watches mean *watch the sky*, warnings mean *it's already upon us*. Act accordingly and think about what message you are sending your children. If you put your family in the shelter space, and then you go outside to "watch the weather," what message are you sending?


I thought this would be a perfect time to describe the functions of the emergency management office and our relationship with response agencies. (con't. on page 2)






Call before you burn


With the weather warming up, many people take advantage of the nice days to burn off debris, leaves, etc. Please call first to determine if it is safe to burn.


 When calling, please give your name and location of the burn. We use this information in case it is called in as fire, and we will then know that it is a controlled burn.

 The following factors determine if it is a burn day or not:

Humidity (must be over 35%)

Wind speed (must be less than 10 mph)

 In order to clear land for building and development, an additional Department of Natural Resources permit must be filled out. Once this permit is filled out by the owner or builder, it will take 24 to 48 hours for review and acceptance from the D.N.R.

 Help us keep you safe by calling in to check the status of the burn day.



Weathering the storms, con't.

At the NWS prediction of a potential storm, I receive notification, which is then passed to our EOC staff and the local response agencies - a head's up, so to speak. When the event is shaping up, the EOC is activated and we monitor the situation. In the event we determine we need "weather spotters" activated for an "eye on the ground," we notify the specific area agencies including amateur radio spotters, emergency services spotters, etc. Those firefighters, law enforcement officers and radio spotters feed information back to the EOC, which is in turn provided in a specific format to the NWS through a specialized Emergency Management internet feed. This information assists the NWS in determining the storm activity and movement. This information is also instrumental in determining the next set of polygon warnings that may need to be issued.

This last year, the NWS has gone to a polygon warning system. It had been tested and tried previously, but is now used almost exclusively. Polygons are specific areas of warning that are far

more concentrated than before. They can target specific areas, such as zip codes, multiple city coordinates, etc., or the old-fashioned way with blanket county-level alerts. Polygons are extremely helpful here at the Lake. When there is a warning in southern Camden County, there is no reason to sound sirens on Horseshoe Bend and send everyone to the basement for no reason if they are unaffected.

In the past, we sent spotters to specific areas to "weather watch." With the death of a spotter in a tornado in southwest Missouri, that practice has been modified and discouraged. Our primary goal is to keep our personnel safe. We now advise and train our spotters to view from a safe location, and not deploy to a remote open area to storm watch. Storm chasing is not advised and is extremely dangerous. Remember, you want to maintain a position of solution to the problem – not be the problem.






From an unknown Kentucky EMD, Emergency Management spans the gap between "it won't happen to me" and "we're all going to die." Be safe.

Tornado Safety Tips – be prepared!


There is no such thing as guaranteed safety inside a tornado. The most violent tornadoes can level and blow away homes and their occupants.


Practice and prepare before the storm. At home, have a tornado plan in place and practice it. Know where you can take shelter and have a pre-determined meeting place after the disaster.


Know the Signs


-  Strong, persistent rotation at the cloud base
-  Whirling dust or debris under cloud base
-  Hail or heavy wind followed by either a dead calm or intense wind shift
-  Loud, continuous roar that doesn't fade
-  At night – small, bright blue-green to white flashes at ground level


What To Do

-  In a house with a basement – Go to the basement. Avoid windows. Get under some kind of protection, such as a heavy table or work bench. Cover yourself with a mattress or blanket.

-  In a house with no basement, a dorm or apartment – Go to the lowest level. Avoid windows. Go to a center room (bathroom, closet or stairway) and crouch low, facing the floor with your hands protecting your head.

-  In a mobile home – Get out!

-  At school – Follow the drill.

-  In a vehicle – If the tornado is visible, and traffic is light, you may avoid its path by moving at right angles to the tornado. If this is not possible, get out of the car and run to the safety of a building. If none is available, get in a ditch and lie flat and face down, protecting the back of your head with your arms. Avoid bridges or overpasses.

After the Storm

Keep your family together and wait for emergency personnel to arrive, if needed. Care for the injured. Stay away from downed powerlines. Stay out of heavily damaged buildings, as there is the possibility of collapse. Do not use matches or lighters in case of a propane, natural gas, or fuel leak. Remain calm and alert and follow instructions from emergency crews or local

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