

National Severe Storm Preparedness Week, April 22-28

Learning common weather-forecast terms and how you should respond to them is an important step toward self and family preparedness for severe weather emergencies.

The National Weather Service uses the words "watch" and "warning" to alert people of potentially dangerous weather. Even though the weather may be calm at your current location at the time a Tornado or Severe Thunderstorm Watch or Warning is issued for your area, conditions can rapidly deteriorate and become life threatening. Don't gamble with your life - always heed warnings even if warnings issued for your area in the past did not result in severe weather.

Weather Watches

A Watch is issued for an area when the risk of a hazardous weather event has increased significantly, but its occurrence, location, and/or timing is still uncertain. It is intended to provide enough lead time so that those who need to set their plans in motion can do so.

- Watch the sky for signs of dangerous weather.
- Watch the weather situation via television, internet and radio.
- Stock up on emergency supplies and know what to do if a Warning is issued.

Weather Warnings

A Warning is issued for an area when a hazardous weather event is occurring, is imminent or has a very high probability of occurring. A warning is used for conditions posing a threat to life or property. Sometimes a severe thunderstorm, a tornado or a flash flood happens so quickly that warnings can't be issued in time.

- Take appropriate safety precautions immediately.

National Weather Service Information

NWS forecasts and weather information covering the Fort Lee and Central Virginia area is provided by the Wakefield Forecast Office (WFO) located in Wakefield, Va.

- WFO Website: www.erh.noaa.gov/er/akq/
- WFO Radio Weather Broadcasts
 - Internet: www.erh.noaa.gov/er/akq/nwr.php
 - 24hr forecast hotline: (757) 899-4200.
 - Weather Radio: WXX-65 (162.475 MHz).

The Installation Operations Center (IOC) at Fort Lee broadcasts emergency weather announcements through LeeKey, the "Big Voice" speaker system, the Fort Lee website (if weather conditions result in changes to the post's operational status), and the IOC Twitter page (twitter.com/#!/leeewatch). For more information about emergency weather preparedness, call Brendan Bowman at (804) 734-7896.