

Severe Weather Week Test Times Changed

(MSC News)--Despite the current wintry conditions, including the snowfall of the weekend, Severe Weather Awareness Week, focused on preparing for the fast approaching spring storm season, is underway, both locally and across the nation.

That includes the annual statewide tornado drill scheduled for 1:30 Tuesday afternoon.

Chad Omitt, Warning Coordination Meteorologist with the National Weather Service in Topeka, says the drill will include Brown, Marshall, Nemaha, Jackson, Jefferson, and Pottawatomie Counties. However, Atchison, Doniphan and Leavenworth Counties will not hold the drill Tuesday.

Instead, it will happen at 1:30 Thursday afternoon. Omitt says that's because those counties are served by the National Weather Service based in Pleasant Hill, Missouri, and they are awaiting the ok to use the Emergency Alert System. "They need to wait on the FCC to give them approval to do it. We use the real, live tornado warning test code so that we can try to test as many of the message delivery devices that are out there that would deliver warning information, so that's one of the reasons we're finding this hold-up," Omitt explained.

Whether your county undergoes the test Tuesday or Thursday, Omitt says the reason for the drill is simple, but potentially lifesaving. "When it comes to reducing your risk from severe storms, especially from tornadoes, [put] a plan together that looks at where am I going to go, what am I going to do in the event that a tornado warning's issued."

Severe Weather Awareness week runs through Friday.

Many Signals Communications