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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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SEVERE WEATHER AWARENESS WEEK: DON'T FORGET THE THREAT
Families, Schools, Businesses Should Participate In Tornado Drills April 24

Severe Weather Awareness Week takes place April 21-25 this year, with the statewide tornado drills on Thursday, April 24.

At 1:45 p.m. Thursday, the National Weather Service will issue a simulated tornado warning, and outdoor warning sirens will be activated. At 6:55 p.m., a second drill will take place in Burnsville for families and second-shift workers.

“Everyone should practice their safety plans during Severe Weather Awareness Week,” says Sgt. Dan Carlson, Burnsville Emergency Management Coordinator. “There is no pattern to these things; a tornado can happen any day — without warning — and your preparation time is well spent.”

According to National Weather Service data, tornadoes have occurred in every Minnesota county at some time during the past 57 years. Dakota County has experienced 19 tornadoes since 1950. The Minnesota Department of Public Safety Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management, along with the National Weather Service and the American Red Cross, sponsors Severe Weather Awareness Week annually to promote weather knowledge and planning. Their Web site, at www.severeweather.state.mn.us, contains tornado safety information along with instructions on surviving thunderstorms, hail, straight-line winds, heat waves, floods and lightning. Links to the National Weather Service and Red Cross provide fascinating weather facts and a variety of downloadable resources for families, teachers and children.

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