



NEWS RELEASE

Emergency Public Information From:

Franklin County Emergency Management and Homeland Security
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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COUNTY EMERGENCY DIRECTOR WARNS OF THREE SPRING HAZARDS: FLOODS, THUNDERSTORMS, TORNADOES

Worthington Second-Graders Tour Emergency Operations Center March 25

(COLUMBUS, OHIO) – The public should be preparing now for three primary hazards of spring weather in Central Ohio – flooding, thunderstorms, and tornadoes – said Mike Pannell, director of Franklin County Emergency Management and Homeland Security.

To mark Severe Weather Awareness Week in Ohio (March 22-28), starting today the agency will issue a series of Emergency Preparedness Bulletins to help citizens recognize and prepare for the most prevalent spring weather hazards.

The agency will also host a field trip to its Emergency Operations Center in northeast Columbus on March 25 by second-graders from Worthington Christian Schools. The youngsters' tour will coincide with the 2009 Statewide Tornado Drill at 9:50 a.m. that day, when agency personnel will activate the 157-siren Franklin County Outdoor Warning System. At 10 a.m., the students will meet members of the Hazardous Materials team from the City of Columbus Division of Fire.

Pannell said that just like government, citizens can safeguard themselves by doing their own "hazard analysis," creating an emergency plan for their families, and practicing their plans. "Government plays an important role in preparing for weather emergencies, but so do private citizens," Pannell said. "Your personal preparedness can keep you and your family safe, and that can relieve the workload for the rest of the community in times of crisis."

Franklin County Emergency Management and Homeland Security, a local government agency, coordinates county-wide emergency/disaster planning, education, warning, response and recovery to minimize the adverse impact on area residents and property. For more information, go to www.franklincountyohio.gov/emahs/.