



Weather Watches, Warnings and Alerts

TEMA-DHS

Quick Reference Sheet-002

Warning & Alerts 1.A

How a Watch, Warning or Alert Begins

For this example we will use a Severe Thunderstorm

STEP-1- Under normal conditions the Weather Service Office issues a Hazardous Weather Outlook. This statement can come with as little as 1 days notice or as far out as 5 to 7 days notice.

STEP-2- As the Storm approaches and based on the NWS Criteria they will issue one of the following and may increase it to a higher level as the storm approaches;

- ◆ **Special Weather Statement (SPS)** may be issued by the NWS for hazards that have not yet reached warning or advisory status or that do not have a specific code of their own, such as widespread funnel clouds. They are also occasionally used to clear counties from severe weather watches. A common form of special weather statement is a significant weather alert. An EAS activation can and may be requested on very rare occasions.

OR

- ◆ **Severe Thunderstorm Watch** A Severe Thunderstorm Watch is issued when severe thunderstorms are possible in and near the watch area. It does not mean that they will occur. It only means they are possible.

OR

- ◆ **Severe Thunderstorm Warning** A Severe Thunderstorm Warning is issued when severe thunderstorms are occurring or imminent in the warning area.

AND MAY ADD A

- ◆ **Particularly Dangerous Situation (PDS)** is a type of enhanced wording first used by the Storm Prediction Center (SPC), for tornado watches and eventually expanded to use on other severe weather watches and warnings. It is issued at the discretion of the forecaster composing the watch or warning and implies that there is an enhanced risk of very severe and life-threatening weather, usually a major tornado outbreak or (much less often) a long-lived, extreme derecho event, but possibly another weather hazard such as an exceptional flash flood.

Criteria for a Thunderstorm are:

Winds of 58 mph or higher and/or Hail 1 inch in diameter or larger.

STEP-3- **Emergency Alert System (EAS)** is a national warning system in the United States put into place on January 1, 1997 when it replaced the Emergency Broadcast System (EBS). The official EAS is designed to enable the President of the United States to speak to the United States within 10 minutes. In addition to this requirement, EAS is also designed to alert the public of local weather emergencies such as tornadoes and flash floods and severe thunderstorms via the NOAA Weather Radio Network. EAS messages are transmitted via AM, FM, broadcast television, cable television and Land Mobile Radio Service, as well as VHF, UHF, Digital television, satellite television, and digital cable providers, along with Sirius XM satellite radio, smart phones and digital radio broadcasters, have been required to participate in the EAS since December 31, 2006.

STEP -4- **Actions At The Local Level** Under normal conditions TEMA-DHS will begin tracking these storms when the first notices are issued. Very often these storms are tracked long before they enter the alerting area and before they cross the State line.

STEP - 5- **Trained Weather Spotters Deployed** As part of the overall warning layer in Tippecanoe County TEMA-DHS maintains a large group of volunteers that can be activated as the storm approaches to monitor the storm as it comes into the County. In such a time our Department Operations Center (DOC) is activated. If warranted the DOC staff will activate the Outdoor Warning System in Tippecanoe County.



IMPORTANT NOTE

The Outdoor Warning System may be activated for ANY man-made or Natural Disaster. When activated citizens should tune to local media for further information.