

SEVERE WEATHER PROTOCOL

I. PURPOSE

- To insure the notification of all firefighters of severe weather in our area.
- To insure that all stations are staffed with available manpower during severe weather. In the event of a weather occurrence that would normally prevent or delay a response from home (i.e. wires down, trees down, flooding of roadways, etc.), manpower will be available at the station for immediate response.

II. EQUIPMENT FOR RECEIPT OF WEATHER INFORMATION AT THE DISPATCH CENTER

The dispatch center “Central Communications” shall be equipped with an alphanumeric style pager capable of receiving the weather alerts for the area designated as the Akron-Canton-Youngstown group. This is a pager that has a unique “cap” code capable of receiving the severe weather information directly from the National Weather Service in Cleveland, Ohio. This is NOT the regular feature that comes with most pager services; it is a special system that has been designed for distribution of severe weather information throughout the Cleveland, Ohio National Weather Service coverage/warning area.

III. DISPATCH PROCEDURES

Upon receipt of a Severe Thunderstorm Warning or Tornado Warning for Mahoning County, Ohio, the dispatch center shall immediately tone out the fire department in the following manner:

A. Severe Thunderstorm Warning

Prealert: Weather Alert Poland

<Fire Tones>

Alert: Attention all Poland firefighters, the National Weather Service in Cleveland, Ohio has issued a Severe Thunderstorm Warning in effect for Mahoning County until <Time> ... All available firefighters report to your stations.

<Repeat Tone>

B. Tornado Warning

Prealert: Weather Alert Poland

<Fire Tones>

Alert: Attention all Poland firefighters, the National Weather Service in Cleveland Ohio has issued a Tornado Warning in effect for Mahoning County until <Time>

<Repeat Alert>

NOTE: Manpower should not respond to Stations 92 and 93 during a Tornado Warning due to the lack of shelter. Firefighters may report to Station 91 to assist local pedestrians or persons in motor vehicles that require shelter. The station basement shall be the place of shelter. After the tornado risk has passed, all firefighters should respond to their stations, if able to do so.

C. Extension of Cancellation of a Weather Alert

In the event that a weather alert is extended or canceled, the dispatch center shall re-tone the fire department with the information.

Example (Extension):

Prealert: Weather Alert Poland

<Fire Tones>

Alert: Attention all Poland firefighters, the National Weather Service in Cleveland, Ohio have extended the Tornado Warning in effect for Mahoning County until <Time>...

<Repeat Alert>

The dispatch center will not tone the fire department if a warning expires normally.

IV. STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

A. Severe Thunderstorm Warning or Tornado Warning

Any outdoor drill or training shall be immediately stopped and equipment, manpower, and vehicles are to immediately return to their stations.

B. Tornado Warning Only

No fire department vehicle shall be on the road during a Tornado Warning unless responding to an emergency call or directed to do so by a fire department officer.

No fire department response should occur during a Tornado Warning for any non-emergency call until it expires, is canceled or unless directed by a fire department officer.

V. DISASTER PREPAREDNESS

All stations shall be equipped with a disaster kit. This kit should include, but is not limited to:

- A. Flashlights
- B. Extra Batteries
- C. Blankets
- D. Drinking Water
- E. First Aid Kit

Effective Date: 06/08/98

Section II and Section III B Amended: 7/11/2007