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PRESS RELEASE

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SEVERE WEATHER AWARENESS WEEK TO BE MARKED WITH ACTIVITY IN ALLEN COUNTY

(LIMA, OH) – Ohio’s Severe Weather Safety Awareness Week is scheduled for March 21 – March 27, 2004 and the period will not go unnoticed in Allen County according to local Homeland Security & Emergency Management Agency director, Russ Decker.

Many schools in Allen County will provide severe weather training next week, and most will observe the **“Statewide Tornado Drill” set for Wednesday, March 24th at 9:50 a.m.** Locally the county’s 19 outdoor community warning sirens will be sounded in conjunction with the statewide exercise and local radio and television stations will interrupt regular programming for a test of the Emergency Alert System.

A new twist this year will be activation of the **Tornado Warning** plan at the **Allen County Courthouse**. “Most offices within the courthouse will observe this year’s statewide tornado drill, alarms will be sounded and employees and the visiting public will be encouraged to proceed to the first floor of the courthouse to take shelter in the event an actual storm was headed for Lima.” Explains Decker.

And finally, **Storm Spotter Training** will be offered to area first responders, amateur radio operators and the general public on **Wednesday, March 24th, 6:30 p.m. at the St. Rita’s Conference Center**. The **FREE** training is taught by meteorologists from the National Weather Service and hosted by the Allen County Office of Homeland Security & Emergency Management. Although there is no cost for the two-hour class, advanced registration is encouraged by calling (419) 993-1405.

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