

# **2022 Severe Weather Fact Sheet**

## **National Weather Service Lincoln, IL**

### **Severe Weather Preparedness Week: Feb 28 – Mar 4, 2022**

- **Weather Alert Radios will be tested at 10:00 am Tuesday March 1st**
  - All NWS offices in Illinois will conduct a test of Weather Alert Radios at **10:00 am CST Tuesday 3/1/22** for Severe Weather Preparedness Week – and in conjunction with many local municipalities testing their outdoor warning sirens
  - The test will be sent to Weather Alert Radios and the Emergency Alert System (EAS) as a “**Routine Weekly Test**” (RWT)
  - **This will replace the usual Wednesday weekly test of Weather Alert Radios, for this week only!**
- **The main themes for Severe Weather Preparedness Week are:**
  - **Severe thunderstorms can produce tornadoes, but the vast majority of them produce damaging wind gusts in excess of 60 mph, large hail and heavy downpours – without a tornado.**
    - **Never ignore a Severe Thunderstorm Warning!** Just because a tornado is not anticipated does NOT mean the storm isn’t dangerous.
    - **In 2020, 13 people in Illinois were injured by damage caused as a result of severe thunderstorms. Property damage statewide was in the hundreds of millions of dollars.**
    - **Wireless Emergency Alerts** are now set up to alert phones for Severe Thunderstorm warnings with the Considerable or Destructive tags. Considerable = 70 mph wind and/or 1.75” hail (golf ball). Destructive = 80 mph wind and/or 2.75” hail (baseball)
  - **In 2021, we had another December tornado outbreak, with 8 tornadoes in Illinois on Dec 10. There was 1 EF3 tornado that caused 6 fatalities and 1 injury near Edwardsville IL, and 5 EF2 tornadoes in central Illinois causing 1 injury. There was significant property damage in many areas of central and southwestern Illinois totaling millions of dollars.**

- December and November have bumped up into the top 6 months for tornadoes in Illinois over the past 10 years. Dec is #5 and Nov is #6.
- **Do NOT just rely on outdoor warning sirens to alert you that a tornado or severe storm is approaching. Have multiple ways to receive information** such as:
  - **Weather Alert Radio**
  - **Portable radio with battery backup**
  - **Wireless Emergency Alerts on most smart phones**
  - **Cell phone apps that will send you warnings for your area**
  - **Local TV and radio stations**

## **Severe Weather Impacts**

- **The United States experiences more tornadoes than any other country** in the world! An average of nearly 1,300 tornadoes impact the U.S. every year. The most was in 2011 when nearly 1,900 tornadoes were reported across the United States!
- **Illinois averages 53 tornadoes** each year. Last year, 75 tornadoes were reported in Illinois resulting in 6 fatalities, 13 injuries and causing millions of dollars in property damage. 2021 is the 5<sup>th</sup> highest total of tornadoes in Illinois since 1950.
- Tornadoes in Illinois have killed 234 people, and injured more than 4,523 since 1950
- The biggest tornado outbreak in Illinois since 1950 occurred on **April 19, 1996**. A total of 39 tornadoes were reported on that day, including four F3 tornadoes. One person was killed, 74 people were injured, and property damage exceeded \$100 Million.
- High wind from **downbursts and straight-line winds** cause **more damage than nearly 75% of the tornadoes** that occur in Illinois! Illinois averages around 520 reports of thunderstorm related wind damage each year.
- A devastating, long lived line of severe thunderstorms called a derecho, tracked from Iowa into Illinois on **August 10, 2020**. Wind gusts of 70 to 100 mph were reported in 31 counties in northern Illinois. *Ten people were injured and damages were hundreds of millions of dollars.*
- **43 people have died from damaging winds in Illinois since 1984.** Since 2000 there have been 287 people injured in Illinois from severe storm winds.

## Central / Southeast Illinois Severe Weather Statistics

- **Illinois ranks 4<sup>th</sup> in the U.S.** for the most tornadoes per square mile, behind Florida, Kansas and Maryland. Nearly 50% of all Illinois tornadoes occur in central or eastern Illinois, even though this only accounts for 35% of the state's area.
- Of the top 15 counties with the most tornadoes in the state of Illinois, **nine are in central or eastern Illinois**. These are:

**Logan** (ranked #2), **Tazewell** (#3), **Sangamon** (#4), **McLean** (#5), **Woodford** (#6), **Macon** (#7), **Champaign** (#8), **Piatt** (#11), **Vermilion** (#14).

*[Data based on tornadoes per square mile from 1950-2021]*

- Between 2012 and 2021, the **top six months for tornadoes** in Illinois have been : June, May, August, July, December and November (2 cold season months!)

## Severe Weather Warnings

- In the past 10 years, **73% of all severe weather events** (damaging winds, tornadoes and large hail) in central and southeast Illinois **had advance warning** by the NWS Lincoln office, with an **average lead time of 15 minutes**
- NWS Implementation of storm based warnings for smaller areas, and portions of counties, has resulted in an **81% reduction of false alarms across central and eastern Illinois since 2008**.
- A **TORNADO EMERGENCY** is issued when there is a severe threat to life and catastrophic damage is expected due to a confirmed, very strong or violent tornado.

## Severe Weather Preparedness

- The National Weather Service's goal is to build a "**Weather Ready Nation**". The purpose of this initiative is to save lives as well as livelihoods. By increasing the nation's weather readiness the country will be better prepared to protect, mitigate, respond to, and recover from weather-related disasters.

Visit our website at: [www.weather.gov/Lincoln](http://www.weather.gov/Lincoln) for the latest weather and river forecasts, warnings, current conditions, radar & satellite imagery, and climate information.