



# SKYWARN

## What is Skywarn...

SKYWARN is a concept developed in the early 1970s intended to promote a cooperative effort between the National Weather Service (NWS) and communities.

The National Weather Service uses a tremendous amount of technology (e.g., radar, satellite, etc.) to monitor changing weather conditions. All of this technology, however, does have its limitations. For example, the NWS radar tower at Chanhassen cannot see anything occurring in Steele County below 5,000 feet. Because of this limitation, the NWS must rely on first-hand accounts of weather conditions.

SKYWARN provides additional eyes to the NWS, and helps keep our county and surrounding area safe during severe weather.

*Steele County SKYWARN is not a club, but an organization of enthusiasts with shared interests in the areas of severe weather spotting. In Steele County, SKYWARN is a part of Steele County Emergency Management. SKYWARN has long been associated with amateur radio, but participation in SKYWARN does not require an amateur radio license. SKYWARN spotters can communicate by radio, telephone, and internet.*



*SKYWARN spotters are not "storm chasers". Spotters are trained to safely report weather conditions (wind gusts, hail size, rainfall, and cloud formations that could signal a developing tornado). Storm spotting is dangerous and should not be done without proper training, experience and equipment.*

Steele County SKYWARN meetings begin at 7:00 PM on the third Tuesday of each month. Meetings take place at the Owatonna Fire Station, 107 W. Main Street.

Anyone with an interest in weather and storm spotting is invited.

## Get Trained!

## Get Involved!

## We Can Use You...

# STEELE COUNTY SKYWARN



## Information and Preparedness Guide





## What YOU can do before Severe Weather Strikes...

Develop a plan for you and your family at home, work, school, and when outdoors. Practice your plan.

Identify a “safe room” or location in your home and prepare it. Your local Red Cross office can help you with information on how to be ready for any disaster.

Have a NOAA Weather Radio with a warning alarm tone and battery back-up to receive warnings.

A radio scanner tuned to the local SKYWARN frequency can give you even more “up-to-the-minute” information.

*Steele Co. SKYWARN uses 147.105 MHz during severe weather events.*

Keep a state or county highway map nearby to follow storm movement from weather warnings. Maps are available on our web site.

Listen to radio and television for weather watch, and warning information.

The Internet is also an excellent source for radar and weather information. The following link is suggested for Steele Co.

<http://www.steelecountyskywarn.org/WXDashboard.asp>



## Thunderstorms...

## Tornadoes...

## Be Prepared...

## It's Up to YOU!

Each year despite advance warning, many people are killed or seriously injured by tornadoes and severe thunderstorms. Some did not hear the warning, others heard the warning but did not take appropriate action. The following preparedness information, combined with timely severe weather watches and warnings, may save your life. If you hear a warning or observe threatening skies, only YOU can make the decision to seek safety.

This could be the most important decision you will ever make.

## What to Listen For...

### *Severe Thunderstorm Watch:*

NWS Meteorologists have determined that severe thunderstorms are likely to occur in your area. Watch the sky and stay tuned in for when warnings are issued.

### *Severe Thunderstorm Warning:*

NWS Meteorologists have determined that a severe storm is occurring or likely to occur. Warnings indicate imminent danger to life and property for those in the path of the storm.

### *Tornado Watch:*

NWS Meteorologists have determined that conditions are favorable for tornadoes to develop. Remain alert for approaching storms. Be prepared to take shelter.

### *Tornado Warning:*

NWS Meteorologists have determined that a tornado is occurring or likely to occur. Take shelter immediately!

## Tornado Safety Rules

- ◆ The safest place to be is an underground shelter, basement, or safe room.
- ◆ If no underground shelter or safe room is available, a small, windowless interior room or hallway on the lowest level of a sturdy building is the safest alternative.
- ◆ Mobile homes are not safe during tornadoes. Abandon mobile homes and go to the nearest sturdy building or shelter immediately.
- ◆ If you are caught outdoors, seek shelter in a basement, shelter or sturdy building.
- ◆ If flying debris occurs while you are driving, pull over and park. Now you have the following options as a last resort:
  - ◆ Stay in the car with the seat belt on. Put your head down below the windows, covering with your hands and a blanket if possible.
  - ◆ If you can safely get noticeably lower than the level of the roadway, exit your car, and lie in that area, covering your head with your hands.