



# The CERT Monthly

Grand Island-Hall County  
Community Emergency Response Team

April 2010

## Upcoming Events:

### CERT Monthly Training:

- Apr 14, 6:30 pm  
Severe Weather  
City Hall
- May 4, 7:00 pm  
Animal Disease

### CERT Basic Training Coming Summer 2010

Online at:  
cert.gihams.org

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## Severe Weather: Ready, Get Set, Go!

Severe summer weather is an annual hazard that will affect various portions of our community. Simple steps can and should be taken by every home and business to prepare for the threats posed by severe weather.

To help, follow a simple Ready, Set, Go! strategy.

### Ready – Advisories

The National Weather Service provides daily forecasts, hazardous weather outlooks and/or weather advisories that can give you an early “heads up” on weather coming up in the next few days.

By monitoring forecasts, hazardous weather outlooks, and advisories, you can receive preliminary information on the severity, duration, and even location of forecasted severe weather.

Then, maintain a level of preparedness at home or work through plans, supplies, and sources of news/warnings.

### Get Set – Watch

A severe weather watch is issued by the National Weather Service when conditions are favorable for the



This is a photo of the Grand Island tornadoes, June 3, 1980. Photo taken by Rod Gartner. See [www.nebraskaweatherphotos.org](http://www.nebraskaweatherphotos.org)

possible formation of hazardous weather. These watches typically provide a few hours of “heads up” time.

During a **Watch**, you should “get set...” by raising your alertness of where you are, what the weather is doing, and where you could or should go if the situation worsens.

### GO! - Warning

When a weather **Warning** is issued, dangerous conditions are present or imminent. The time for planning and deliberating is over and the

time to take action is now!

In a **Warning**, you must react to the hazard with wisdom and speed. This may include taking shelter from tornadoes, seeking shelter if outside from lightning, damaging winds, or hail. Or evacuating from flood waters as instructed by local authorities.

Follow this simple Ready, Get Set, GO! principle and teach it to your friends.

Remember, now is the time to prepare for severe weather!

## Flooding Hazards – Turn Around, Don't Drown

According to the National Weather Service, more people are killed by flooding each year than by any other single severe weather hazard, including tornadoes, lightning, and hurricanes.

Most fatalities occur at night and when people are trapped inside their own vehicles.

### Flash Flood Warning

If a Flash Flood Warning is issued, or when flash flooding is imminent or occurring, act quickly to protect yourself and your family.

Evacuate areas that are subject to flooding and move to a safe area before access is cut off by rising water. Avoid low spots like dips, canyons, and washes.

If you are advised to evacuate, do so immediately and remember safe evacuation tips:

1. Don't attempt to drive over a road or bridge

covered by flowing water. The depth of the water is not always apparent and the integrity of the road or bridge is not known.

2. Never drive around barricades or restrictions.
3. If your vehicle stalls, leave it immediately and move to higher ground. A couple feet of moving water can sweep your vehicle away, even larger vehicles like trucks and SUVs.
4. Never walk, swim or play in flood waters which can contain debris, chemicals, downed power lines and other hidden dangers.
5. Flood waters can flow more rapidly than is readily apparent. Only a few inches of water can sweep you off your feet and carry you off.

6. Be particularly cautious at night when flooding dangers are more difficult to recognize.
7. Stay informed by monitoring your local radio and the National Weather Service through NOAA All-Hazards Radio.

Flooding is a significant danger in our community, threatening lives and property.

Determine today if you are ready to:

- Be aware of flooding dangers in my area.
- Monitor local news and NOAA Radio.
- Evacuate, using multiple routes.
- Shelter somewhere else for a few days.

Remember, with flood waters: **TURN AROUND, DON'T DROWN!**

## Resources

- National Weather Service  
[www.weather.gov](http://www.weather.gov)



Sycamore Overpass, Grand Island, NE  
2005



Independence Ave / Hwy 2, Grand Island, NE  
2005

## Severe Thunderstorms

Severe thunderstorms are a common and regularly occurring hazard in Hall County.

A thunderstorm is considered severe when it produces:

- hail that is at least one inch in diameter,
- damaging winds equal or greater than 58 mph, or
- a tornado.

Severe thunderstorms can produce numerous dangers to life and property, along with the threat of hail, damaging winds, and tornadoes, including lightning, flooding and flash flooding.

### What is Hail?

Hail is produced in a thunderstorm when rising currents of air, or updrafts, carry water droplets to a height where they can freeze. The hail stone will grow inside the storm until it is too heavy to be kept

aloft by the updraft, and it falls to the ground.

Large hail is an indication of a severe thunderstorm because the strong updrafts have maintained hail long enough to grow to a large size.

### Downburst Winds

A second significant threat of severe thunderstorms is damaging winds. These winds are a small area of rapidly descending air beneath a thunderstorm.

When descending air hits the ground, it spreads in all directions causing damage in all areas through straight line winds on the surface.

Damage from such winds can be comparable to a tornado.

Be aware of impending weather by monitoring local forecasts, and tuning to the NOAA All Hazards Radio.

Watch for signs of bad weather and plan today how you will:

- Receive your severe weather watches and warnings.
- Take action when warnings are issued or when severe weather strikes.
- Protect yourself from lightning, inside and out.
- Protect your home and property from the dangers of severe weather.
- Recover from damage caused by a severe thunderstorm.

Severe Thunderstorms are almost guaranteed to strike our area every year. Simple preparedness steps today will allow you to be well informed and ready to react to these deadly threats.

Remember, now is the time to prepare for severe thunderstorms this spring and summer.

## Measuring Hail

- Avoid using “marbles” as a reference since marbles come in various sizes.
- Instead, use U.S. coins: dime, penny, nickel, quarter.
- For larger hail, use sports balls: golf, baseball, etc.

## One “Hail” of a Stone

The largest hailstone ever recorded fell in Aurora, Nebraska, and measured 7 inches in diameter, and had a circumference of over 18 inches.



An impressive lightning display as seen from a thunderstorm in Grand Island, Nebraska on August 27, 2005.

Taken by D.J. Fuller  
Source: NWS Hastings



## Grand Island—Hall County Emergency Management

100 East First Street Grand  
Island, Nebraska 68801

Phone: (308) 385-5360  
Fax: (308) 385-5378

beready@grand-island.com

[www.grand-island.com/ready](http://www.grand-island.com/ready)

## Training Opportunities

### CERT Basic Training

- **Coming Soon to Grand Island: Summer 2010.**

### CERT Continuous Training

Regular Hall County CERT training meetings are scheduled the 1st Tue of every month, 7pm.

- April 14, 6:30 pm, City Hall, National Weather Service Severe Weather Spotting
- May 4, 7pm, Station #1 – Animal Diseases & Ag Preparedness

### Other Training Opportunities

**Night w/ EMS** – St. Francis Memorial, 2116 West Faidley Avenue. Second Mondays, 7pm.

**Free admission**, no registration needed. [www.nemsa.org](http://www.nemsa.org).

April 12–Farm Accidents

May 20 - Diabetic Emergencies

July 12 – Pediatric Assessment

**Red Cross Training** – Contact Renae Foster at 382-3790 or [Renae@giredcross.org](mailto:Renae@giredcross.org).

All Red Cross Training above is located at 404 E. Third St. in Grand Island.

More training opportunities and activities are found on the CERT online calendar  
<http://cert.gihams.org>.

Contact Jennifer Green for information regarding Training Opportunities

## CERT Email Group

If you send an email to: [gicert@googlegroups.com](mailto:gicert@googlegroups.com) you will effectively be emailing everyone in our CERT membership. It's a way to share information via email with the entire group, without having to know everyone's email address. Feel free to bring up topics of interest to the group, ask questions, or share information that might be of interest to the other CERT members.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to email Roger Hammond directly at: [rahammond@charter.net](mailto:rahammond@charter.net)

## How Far Away is Lightning?

Count the number of seconds between a flash of lightning and the resulting thunder. Divide this number by 5 to get an estimate of the distance to the lightning (in miles) to the lightning strike. So, a 6 second gap between lightning and thunder tells you the strike was 1.2 miles away. Use the 30-30 rule. Keep lightning 30 miles away and stay inside 30 minutes after the last lightning strike.