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### **Village issues severe weather preparedness reminder**

*Residents encouraged to have disaster plan, emergency radios*

ELMWOOD PARK – Fire Chief Michael Marino issued a reminder to residents today that March is severe weather preparedness month in Illinois, with special emphasis this week across the state. As spring arrives, diverse weather patterns can often converge, causing a greater likelihood of thunderstorms, flooding and tornadoes.

“Residents need to be alert to the changing conditions and have a plan of where to take shelter,” Marino said. “We have already seen the pain and devastation that violent weather can cause, following the killer tornadoes that struck Harrisburg, Illinois, last week,”

The chief specifically recommends residents create a disaster plan and have extra supplies on hand in the event of a sustained power outage. Supplies should include bottled water, a three-day supply of nonperishable food, prescription medication, baby formula, a flashlight and a wrench or pliers to turn off utilities.

The Village has two outside warning devices, designed to alert anyone outdoors to seek shelter immediately. “I also strongly suggest residents buy a portable emergency NOAA radio for their home,” Chief Marino continued. “They are very affordable, and stay quiet until there’s an actual weather alert.”

Residents should also stay tuned to radio, TV and their smart phones for the latest on fast-moving weather conditions as well as watches and warnings. A number of free services are available, such as The Weather Channel. Free alerts for your city or zip code can be sent via text message or email. Sign up at [www.weather.com](http://www.weather.com).

The Illinois Emergency Management Agency points out the difference between a tornado “watch” and a “warning.” A watch means tornadoes are possible in your area. A warning means a tornado has been sighted or detected by radar. A severe weather preparedness guide is available on IEMA’s web site.

Last year, there were 73 tornadoes reported in Illinois, significantly above the 48 twisters in 2010. The state ranks fifth in the United States when it comes to having the most tornadoes.