

MARCH 2023

FIRE & RESCUE HEALTHY NEWS

Brought to you by the South Heartland District Health Department

Resources:

If you are having difficulties after a call, talk to someone on your team that you trust about your concerns and struggles.

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 988

You can also call: 1-800-273-8255

Adult & COVID-19 Vaccines:

To get a COVID-19 vaccine or booster. Visit southheartlandhealth.ne.gov, click on the COVID-19 under "Hot Topics," you can search for COVID-19 vaccine clinics in your area.

You're never too old to be up-to-date on your vaccines. Visit: www.immunize.org/catg.d/p4030.pdf for more information.

March is Severe Weather Month

Now is the time for everyone to review their safety plans and be prepared for the severe weather season. Although the entire month is considered Severe Weather Month, Monday, March 27, through Friday, March 31 has been designated as Severe Weather Awareness Week for the state of Nebraska. This week provides the National Weather Service with an opportunity to test communication systems and to get potentially lifesaving information to the public.

Upcoming Severe Weather Trainings (brought to you by SKYWARN)

To continue promoting health and safety of our communities, it's important for first responders to have knowledge of various severe weather threats. Here is a list of upcoming Severe Weather Trainings throughout the area:

- **Monday, March 13, Superior Fire Station (154 West 5th Street)**
- **Wednesday, March 22, Clay County Fairgrounds in Clay Center**
- **Monday, April 3, Hastings Museum (1330 North Burlington Ave)**
- **Wednesday, April 12, Guide Rock Fire Station (538 East State Street)**

Storm Preparations:

Often there is enough notice of a pending weather event to prepare. Crews and leadership should take necessary actions to assure that vehicles, staff, and stations are in prepared for such an event and consider:

- Monitor local media and websites for storm and road conditions
- Communicate with all staff to assure they have proper clothing and supplies
- Prepare station and grounds for potential high winds/snow
- Equip vehicles with any special equipment or supplies

Mental Health First Aid

When people are first faced with disaster and you first meet them, intense emotions are often present and appropriate. They are a result of intense fear, uncertainty, and apprehension.

Communicate Calmly: Use SOLER

- Sit squarely or stand using the L-stance
- (shoulder 90° to the other person's shoulder).
- Open posture.
- Lean forward.
- Eye contact.
- Relax.

Establish a Relationship:

- Introduce yourself if they do not know you.
- Ask the person what they would like to be called.
- Do not shorten their name or use their first name without their permission.
- With some cultures, it is important to always address the person as Mr. or Mrs.
- Use Concrete Questions to Help the Person

Communicate Warmth:

- Use a soft tone.
- Smile.
- Use open and welcoming gestures.
- Allow the person you are talking with to dictate the distance between you.

Focus:

- Use closed-end questions.
- Explain why you are asking the question.

Speak to the Person with Respect:

- Use words like please and thank you.
- Use positive language.



402-462-6211

606 N Minnesota Ave., Suite 2, Hastings
southheartlandhealth.ne.gov

Thank you for your constant service to your communities!



FIRE & RESCUE HEALTHY NEWS CONTINUED

Severe Thunderstorm Warning

This is issued when either a severe thunderstorm is indicated by radar or a spotter reports a thunderstorm producing hail one inch or larger in diameter and/or winds equal or exceed 58 miles an hour.

- Monitor local media and websites for storm and road conditions

Tornado Watch

- Assure all crews are aware of pending watch
- Discuss potential tornado shelters in the community
- Contact those locations and ask permission to shelter at their facility, if needed
- Discuss how communication regarding a Tornado Warning will be communicated to them

Tornado Warning

Actions for POTENTIAL Tornado:

- Assure all crews are aware of the tornado warning
- Move to a sturdy shelter as needed
- If safe to move, consider separating assets to protect crews and vehicles

Example: place one ambulance in the local hospital garage, one at the fire station, one at the ambulance base.

- Consider safety of moving vs. sheltering in place
- Consider the safety of the structure
- If safe, consider moving some assets away from tornado path

Example: If the Tornado path is from the South East, would it make sense to move some assets to the West and further South of the tornado's path?

Actions for an IMMINENT Tornado:

- Cease EMS response (seek leadership approval if time permits)
- Notify dispatch you will be sheltering in place and responses will be held until it is safe to respond
- Bring essential items with you such as; EMS radio, cell phone, am/fm radio, flashlight

SOURCES: <https://ndemsa.org>

dhhs.ne.gov/Documents/SAMHSA_Psc_yhFirstAidForFirstResponders.pdf

Actions for Post Tornado strike/Severe Weather:

- Assure all crew members are safe and vehicles able to respond
- Respond to any pending calls in order of criticalness
- Be aware of hazards such as downed power lines, gas leaks, nails and debris, etc.

Identify potential sources of elevated CO in home

Potential sources of CO include: automobiles, motorcycles, trucks, golf carts, RVs, gasoline, propane, diesel-fueled appliances, lawn mowers, power generators, furnaces, water heaters, clothes dryers, natural gas or propane refrigerators, ranges, ovens, space heaters, fireplaces, gas logs, wood and coal stoves, charcoal or gas grills, kerosene heaters, wood stoves, and any other equipment or appliance that burns fuel.

Actions for Post Tornado strike/Severe Weather:

Prior to sending any crew out on a requested transfer during times of severe weather, poor road conditions, or crew fatigue concerns, a determination should be made regarding safety and whether travel is permissible.

Ongoing communication with all parties involved in the transfer process is essential when safety concerns exist. All decisions should be made in the best interest of the patient, including the patient's safety as well as the need for transfer to a higher level of care.

The ambulance should be verified to be 'mission-ready' prior to the start of the trip, including proper tire-pressure, fuel level, oil level, windshield washer fluid, safety supplies, maps/GPS, radio.