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## **PRESS RELEASE**

**+**American Red Cross  
Washtenaw County Chapter  
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### **RED CROSS OFFERS SAFETY TIPS FOR EXTREME WEATHER**

*Ann Arbor, MI, June 13, 2008-* Summer is here and so is the severe weather. Storms are striking the Midwest breaking previous records, damaging homes, and leaving people stranded and without power.

The Washtenaw County Chapter of the American Red Cross offers the following tips in the event of strong thunderstorms with lightning, power outages or tornado sightings.

#### **Before Lightning Strikes...**

- Keep an eye on the sky. Look for darkening skies, flashes of light, or increasing wind. Listen for the sound of thunder.
- If you can hear thunder, you are close enough to the storm to be struck by lightning. Go to safe shelter immediately.
- Listen to **NOAA** Weather Radio, commercial radio, or television for the latest weather forecasts

#### **When a Storm Approaches...**

- Find shelter in a building or car. Keep car windows closed and avoid convertibles.
- Telephone lines and metal pipes can conduct electricity. Unplug appliances. Avoid using the telephone or any electrical appliances. (Leaving electric lights on, however, does not increase the chances of your home being struck by lightning.)
- Avoid taking a bath or shower, or running water for any other purpose.
- Turn off the air conditioner. Power surges from lightning can overload the compressor, resulting in a costly repair job!
- Draw blinds and shades over windows. If windows break due to objects blown by the wind, the shades will prevent glass from shattering into your home.

**When a power outage occurs:**

- Only use a flashlight for emergency lighting. Never use candles!
- Turn off electrical equipment you were using when the power went out.
- Avoid opening the refrigerator and freezer.
- Do not run a generator inside a home or garage.
- If you use a generator, connect the equipment you want to power directly to the outlets on the generator. Do not connect a generator to a home's electrical system.
- Listen to local radio and television for updated information.

**When a tornado hits:**

- Be familiar with the Warning Sirens- seek shelter when they are activated
- Tune a battery-powered radio to hear official information:
  - WEMU 89.1 FM
  - WWW 102.9 FM
  - WQKL 107.1 FM
  - WAAM 1600 AM
- In a home or building, move to a pre-designated shelter, such as a basement
- If an underground shelter is not available, move to a small interior room or hallway on the lowest floor and get under a sturdy piece of furniture.
- Stay away from windows.
- Get out of automobiles.

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