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Emergency Management Officials Launch Weather Alert Radio Contest

***‘Weather Alert Radios Save Lives’ contest promotes awareness;
100 radios to be awarded***

SPRINGFIELD – The recent devastating tornadoes in northern Illinois were a heartbreaking reminder of the tornado risk in Illinois. To increase awareness and use of an important severe weather alerting tool, the Illinois Emergency Management Agency (IEMA) and the Illinois Emergency Services Management Association (IESMA) today launched an online quiz for a chance to win a weather alert radio.

The ‘Weather Alert Radios Save Lives’ contest is available on the Ready Illinois website at www.Ready.Illinois.gov. The contest will run from April 22 – May 22. This is the third time IEMA and IESMA have sponsored the statewide contest.

“It’s important for people to have multiple ways to receive severe weather warnings, particularly at night when most of us are sleeping,” said IEMA Director James K. Joseph. “Weather alert radios will sound a tone when a warning has been issued for your area and give you information about the approaching hazard. Similar to a smoke alarm or carbon monoxide detector, a weather alert radio can give you precious time to take safety precautions.”

A total of 100 weather alert radios will be awarded to participants who register after reading information about the radios and successfully completing a five-question quiz. Winners will be announced in late May. The radios were purchased by IESMA as part of an effort to increase the use of the devices in communities throughout Illinois.

“IESMA is excited to team up with IEMA for this valuable awareness contest,” said IESMA President Kevin Sargent. “Each region of the state is affected by some type of extreme weather each year. This year is no exception with the tornado outbreak in central and northern Illinois earlier this month. IESMA believes many lives are saved each year by people being able to receive severe weather warnings from NOAA weather alert radios. Please take time to participate in this contest for a chance to win one of 100 weather alert radios to be given away.”

The National Weather Service (NWS) and state and local emergency management officials encourage individuals and businesses to have a National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Weather Radio All Hazards with battery backup, a tone-alert feature and Specific Area Message Encoding (SAME) technology, which allows the radio to be programmed to receive alerts for specified counties. When an alert is issued for that area, the device will sound a warning alarm tone followed by the broadcast message.

Besides weather information, the NWS also broadcasts warnings and post-event information for all types of hazards, including natural, environmental and public safety hazards, such as earthquakes, chemical spills and AMBER alerts.

More information about severe weather preparedness also is available at www.Ready.Illinois.gov.