



STATE OF WISCONSIN
DEPARTMENT OF MILITARY AFFAIRS
DIVISION OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Brian M. Satula
Administrator

Scott Walker
Governor

For more information contact: Tod Pritchard Office: 608-242-3324 Cell: 608-219-4008

For Immediate Release

5/16/2012

**One Year Ago: Joplin and LaCrosse Tornadoes
Anniversary is a reminder to “Listen, Act and Live!”**

(MADISON) – May 22, 2011... two tornadoes strike on the same day. One hits LaCrosse Wisconsin packing winds of up to 120 mph on the city’s south side. Fortunately no lives were lost. But the storm caused millions of dollars in damage. The other tornado strikes Joplin, Missouri. It was one of the deadliest storms in U.S. history killing 161 people and injuring over 1,000. The massive EF-5 with winds over 200 mph hit the city of more than 50,000.

Both tornadoes struck major population centers. One of the major myths of tornadoes is that they don’t strike cities and that somehow metropolitan areas are “protected” by all the buildings.

Another lesson learned that day is how people react to tornado warnings. In Joplin:

- A majority of residents did not immediately seek shelter when tornado warnings were issued.
- People needed between two and nine warnings to take action and seek shelter. For example, if they heard the sirens going off they would look in the sky, then go to a TV to get information and then call a friend, etc.
- The time it took between those warnings and seeking shelter cost lives.

What can you do? ReadyWisconsin (part of the team at Wisconsin Emergency Management) urges everyone to **Listen, Act and Live!**

Listen: When severe weather is possible (Thunderstorm or Tornado Watch issued) pick a credible source of information and keep in touch with that source until the danger has past. One of the best tools is a NOAA Weather Radio (also know as an Emergency Weather Radio).

Act: When you hear a tornado warning (tornado seen by spotters or detected on radar) seek the best shelter you can find immediately. Don’t waste time checking multiple sources of information. You may have only seconds to find a safe place.

Live: Your chances of survival multiply by listening and acting quickly. Hopefully the storm will pass with no damage. But don’t risk your life on a hope.

For more information visit our website: <http://readywisconsin.wi.gov>. You’ll find great information on how to protect you and your family from tornadoes and other severe weather threats and videos of the Joplin tornado.

#End#