

Dear all,

Kindly receive the severe weather alert below and disseminate widely as stipulated in the NAC and EWC terms of reference.

In light of this severe weather alert as produced by the South African Weather Service (SAWS) and other centers, the following advisory guidelines are suggested. It is emphasized that these advisories are broad guidelines and should be interpreted considering the local aspects of the region such as soil types, cultural preferences and farming systems. Depending on the particular region, the prioritization of the guidelines will differ. The basic strategy to follow would be to minimize and diversify risk. The province should further simplify, downscale and package the information according to their language preference and if possible use local radio stations and farmers' days in disseminating the information

Impact based warning issued by SAWS, valid 13 January 2021

Yellow I1 for severe thunderstorms, with strong winds, large amounts of small hail and heavy downpours, that could lead to localized damages to formal and informal structures, temporary infrastructure and traffic disruptions over the western and northern interior of the Eastern cape and the north-eastern parts of Western Cape.

Yellow (L2) warning for severe thunderstorms that can result in possible hail leading to localized damage to vehicles, damaging winds and heavy downpours that may result in localized flooding with damage in the infrastructure and settlements both formal and informal as well as localized injuries due to flying debris.

Severe thunderstorm is occurring or is imminent in about 30 minutes to an hour. Many strong thunderstorms produce hail. Large hail, or flying glass it may have broken, can injure people and animals. Hail can be smaller than a pea, or as large as a softball, and can be very destructive to automobiles, glass surfaces (skylights and windows), roofs, plants, and crops. In a hailstorm, take cover immediately. Livestock is particularly vulnerable to hail, so bring animals into shelter before storms begin.

Severe thunderstorm specific planning should include the following:

- Learn about your area's severe thunderstorm risk.
- Pick "safe places" in your farm for your livestock and another for where family members can gather during a thunderstorm.
- consider making your severe thunderstorm "safe place" on the lowest floor of the building,
- Learn how to squat low to the ground.

- Discuss how you would be warned of an approaching thunderstorm.
- Get training.
- Discuss severe thunderstorms with your family.

How to protect your property

- Insure crops against financial loss from storm damage.
- Make a list of items to bring inside in the event of a storm.
- Keep trees and shrubbery trimmed.
- Remove any debris or loose items in your yard.
- Consider installing permanent shutters to cover windows.

What to do before a thunderstorm

- Use a Local Radio station to keep you informed of weather watches and warnings issued in your area.
- If planning a trip or extended period of time outdoors, listen to the latest forecasts and take necessary action if threatening weather is possible.
- Postpone outdoor activities if thunderstorms are imminent.e.g. Ploughing, irrigation, planting, milking, livestock dipping, pruning, budding or fertilizer application.
- Keep an eye on the sky. Pay attention to weather clues around you that may warn of imminent danger.
- Stay aware of your surroundings. Look for places you might go should severe weather threatens.
- Listen for the sound of thunder. Go to safe shelter immediately.

What to do during a severe thunderstorm WATCH

- Listen to a local radio or television stations for updated information.
- Avoid natural lightning rods such as tractors, fishing poles and camping equipment.
- Be prepared to seek shelter if a severe thunderstorm approaches.

If you perceive a severe thunderstorm approaching:

- Secure outdoor objects such as lawn furniture that could blow away or cause damage or injury. Take light objects inside.
- Shutter windows securely and brace outside doors. This will help protect your house from damaging winds or flying debris.
- Avoid electrical equipment and telephones. Lightning could follow the wire. Television sets are particularly dangerous at this time.
- Avoid bathtubs, water faucets, and sinks because metal pipes can transmit electricity.

Media and community education Ideas

- Publish a special section in your local newspaper with emergency information about thunderstorms and lightning.
- Periodically inform your community of local public warning systems.
- Have your meteorologist speak to farmers about the dangers of thunderstorms, lightning, and hail.

A comprehensive list of strategies can be found in the monthly NAC Advisory. It can be accessed from the following websites: www.dalrrd.gov.za. For more information contact:-

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