



#048-22

**Commonwealth of Virginia
Virginia Department of Education
Superintendent's Memo #048-22**

DATE: February 25, 2022
TO: Division Superintendents
FROM: Jillian Balow, Superintendent of Public Instruction
SUBJECT: **Save the Date for the 2022 Tornado Drill**

The Statewide Tornado Drill, coordinated by the Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM), is a yearly opportunity to prepare Virginians for tornado emergencies and to test public warning systems. Please mark your school calendar to note that Virginia's Severe Weather Awareness Week will be from March 7-11, 2022. The Statewide Tornado Drill will take place on Tuesday, March 8, 2022, at 9:45 a.m. (Backup date is March 10, 2022). The alert will go out via a Required Monthly Test (RMT) code from the National Weather Service to National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) weather radios and local broadcasters. Participation in the statewide drill fulfills the requirement of the Code of Virginia [§ 22.1-137.1](#) for schools to participate in at least one tornado drill each year. Schools may choose an alternate date and time if this date is not convenient.

Since this year's drill will utilize the RMT, most NOAA weather radios will not automatically sound an alert tone. Those participating in the drill, including schools and businesses, should turn on their NOAA Weather Radio by 9:40 a.m. to listen to the voice broadcast. Local radio stations, television stations, and cable outlets will also broadcast the test message via the Emergency Alert System (EAS). Information and resources are available on the [NOAA Virginia 2022 Severe Weather Preparedness Week](#) webpage.

For help with planning the drill, school officials may wish to contact their local city, county, or town emergency management office. Emergency management officials can assist school

personnel with identifying safe areas in the building and creating an emergency plan. A list of local emergency managers is available at the [Virginia Department of Emergency Management \(VDEM\)](#) website. Additional information about tornado preparation is available on [VDEM's Tornadoes webpage](#).

For more information

For questions about Tornado Preparedness Day or the statewide drill, you may contact Jason Elmore, MPIO, Deputy Director of Communications, by telephone at (804) 219-9733, or by email at Jason.Elmore@vdem.virginia.gov, or Rebecca Kahila, School Safety and Discipline Specialist, Office of Student Services, by telephone at (804) 225-4654, or by email at Rebecca.Kahlia@doe.virginia.gov.

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