



STATE OF FLORIDA

DIVISION OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

RICK SCOTT
Governor

BRYAN W. KOON
Director

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 2012

CONTACT: PUBLIC INFORMATION
(850) 413-9969
www.FloridaDisaster.org

FLORIDA RESIDENTS ADVISED TO STAY ALERT AS STORM SYSTEM BRINGS POTENTIAL FOR SEVERE WEATHER ACROSS THE FLORIDA PANHANDLE SATURDAY AND ACROSS THE NORTHERN FLORIDA PENINSULA SUNDAY

TALLAHASSEE – State and local emergency management officials recommend residents and visitors across North and Central Florida stay alert as a storm system moves into the area Saturday morning through Sunday afternoon. This storm system will have the potential to produce frequent lightning strikes, heavy rainfall, high wind gusts, and isolated tornadoes.

“A storm system and associated squall line of thunderstorms will enter the Florida Panhandle Saturday evening and move eastward overnight into the Florida Big Bend region, before moving through the Florida Peninsula on Sunday,” said State Meteorologist Amy Godsey. “Strong to severe storms are possible ahead of the main squall line and the Storm Prediction Center has placed the entire Florida Panhandle, Big Bend and northern Florida Peninsula in an area of enhanced risk of severe storms this weekend. We encourage residents, visitors, and businesses to monitor this weather system and be prepared to follow any instructions if warnings are issued.”

Tornado Watches will likely be issued for portions of the area on Saturday and Sunday. A Tornado Watch means conditions are favorable for tornadoes and severe thunderstorms. A Tornado Warning means a tornado has been reported as sighted, or been picked up on radar in the area. Residents and visitors to the state should monitor local media outlets and ensure that their NOAA All-Hazards Weather Radio alert settings are turned on.

In addition, strong thunderstorms will be capable of producing damaging straight-line wind gusts, frequent cloud-to-ground lightning strikes, and locally heavy rainfall of one to three inches. A Flood Watch is in effect for Escambia, Santa Rosa and Okaloosa counties from 6 a.m. CST to midnight CST on Saturday. Anyone driving during thunderstorm activity should use caution and not cross any flooded roadways.

For more information on the Florida Division of Emergency Management and to GET A PLAN!, please visit: www.FloridaDisaster.org. Follow us on Twitter at www.Twitter.com/FLSERT or on Facebook at www.Facebook.com/FloridaSERT.

###