FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Friday, March 22, 2013
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www.FloridaDisaster.org

SEVERE WEATHER POSSIBLE FOR NORTHWEST FLORIDA THIS WEEKEND

TALLAHASSEE – The Florida Division of Emergency Management (FDEM) urges residents and visitors to stay alert and use caution this weekend as a low pressure system is forecast to bring severe weather across Northwest Florida and the Suwannee River Valley on Saturday. Have a NOAA All-Hazards Weather Radio in your home of office to receive warnings from the National Weather and follow all instructions from local officials.

“The timing of the severe weather will be two-fold as this low pressure system causes a warm front to lift through the Panhandle and Big Bend on Saturday afternoon or early evening before a cold front sweeps through the area late Saturday night and Sunday morning,” said FDEM Meteorologist Brad Schaaf. “Be sure to pay close attention to the forecasts for your area and visit www.FloridaDisaster.org for more information on how to stay safe during severe weather.”

Primary threats from this potential storm system may include lightning, damaging winds in excess of 60 miles per house, large hail and isolated tornadoes. In addition, widespread rainfall of up to two inches is possible across North Florida with locally heavier amounts of up to four inches of rain. This could cause localized flash flooding in low-lying or urban areas.

The potential for severe weather will be greatly reduced on Sunday. However, a few storms across Northeast and Central Florida may become strong or even severe. These storms may produce dangerous lightning, gusty winds and small hail.

If severe weather threatens your area, be sure to follow these important safety tips:

- Ensure your NOAA All-Hazards Weather Radio is on and programmed for your area or stay tuned to a trusted local media outlet for the most current weather situation. Ensure your disaster supply kit is prepared and heed all instructions from local officials.
- Know what you would do in the event of a severe thunderstorm or tornado watch or warning. If a tornado warning is issued for your area seek shelter immediately in a interior room, away from windows.
- NEVER drive through flooded roadways as road beds may be washed out under flood waters, and just one foot of fast-moving flood water can move most cars off the road.
- If thunder roars, go indoors. If you can hear thunder, you are close enough to be struck by lightning and should seek shelter immediately.

To learn more about severe weather in Florida, and to Get A Plan!, visit www.FloridaDisaster.org, and follow FDEM on Twitter at @FLSERT, on Facebook at www.Facebook.com/FloridaSERT and www.Facebook.com/kidsgetaplan and on Google+ at FLSERT.