STATE OF FLORIDA
DIVISION OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

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FLORIDA EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT ENCOURAGES KIDS TO PARTICIPATE IN 2010 SEVERE WEATHER AWARENESS WEEK, POSTER AND VIDEO CONTESTS
~Deadlines for submission of Poster and Video Contests extended~

TALLAHASSEE—State emergency management officials today reminded all Floridians that Florida Severe Weather Awareness Week is scheduled for January 24 - 30, 2010. This year, the annual public awareness campaign includes a poster and video public service announcement (PSA) contest which was announced in late November. The deadlines to submit entries for these contests have been extended into the second week of January 2010.

"The goal of the week is to educate our residents and visitors about the natural hazards they may face and provide important information to help keep them safe," said Interim Deputy Director David Halstead of the Florida Division of Emergency Management. "It is a team effort and we are proud to have many great sponsors who are committed to this week of outreach and awareness."

Today, the Division announced that once again they are teaming up with the American Red Cross to sponsor the annual poster contest. This continuing partnership reaffirms the commitment of both organizations to ensure that our residents are prepared for any disaster that may occur.

“We are excited to once again to partner with the Division of Emergency Management on the annual poster contest,” said Florida Disaster Officer for the American Red Cross Karen Hagan. “These types of outreach efforts to get our youth involved in disaster preparedness activities are an important step in building a culture of preparedness in Florida."

Other contest sponsors announced today include the Florida Association of Broadcasters, Midland Radio, the Federal Alliance for Safe Homes (FLASH), I.D.E.A.S. (Integrity Arts and Technology, Inc.) and the Florida Emergency Preparedness Association (FEPA).

Annual Poster Contest

Fourth and fifth graders in all 67 school districts are invited to participate in the statewide poster contest. All entries must be postmarked on or before MONDAY, JANUARY 14TH, 2010.
and must arrive at the Florida Division of Emergency Management in Tallahassee no later than **WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 13th, 2010**. Winners will be notified by phone. The top winners' artwork is scheduled to be displayed in the State Emergency Operations Center during the first full week of February 2010. Prizes will include tickets for the winner and their family to Walt Disney World, cash, weather radios and many other exciting things to be announced soon. For complete contest rules go to [www.FloridaDisaster.org/SWAW2010](http://www.FloridaDisaster.org/SWAW2010).

**New Video PSA Contest for 2010**

Middle and high school students in grades 6-8 and 9-12 are invited to produce a 30-second public service announcement (PSA) incorporating a safety or preparedness message about one of the following topics: **Tornadoes**, **Rip Currents** or **Using NOAA Weather Radios**.

Final digital videos must be mastered as a DVD for submission to the Division. All entries must be postmarked on or before **MONDAY, JANUARY 11, 2010** and must arrive at the Florida Division of Emergency Management in Tallahassee no later than **WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 13, 2010**. For complete contest rules and topic information, go to [www.FloridaDisaster.org/SWAW2010](http://www.FloridaDisaster.org/SWAW2010).

There will be one individual or group (limit 4 people per group) winner chosen for both middle school and high school-level videos. The winning video(s) will be professionally reproduced for broadcast use by the Division of Emergency Management in their statewide public awareness campaign. A production team will come to the winner(s)' hometown and will spend a full day shooting the winning PSA. The winner(s) will spend the day acting as the Director and will be honored at a rally in their hometown. Additional prizes will include tickets for the winner and their family to Walt Disney World, cash, weather radios and many other exciting things to be announced soon. The Division anticipates announcing another major sponsor and more prize information soon.

Winners will be announced on January 23, 2010, at a kick-off event for Severe Weather Awareness Week in Orlando. Winners unable to attend this event will be mailed their additional prizes.

These contests are part of an annual public awareness campaign that also includes the statewide **Tornado Drill** to be conducted by the National Weather Service Offices in Florida at 10:10 a.m. Eastern Time (9:10 a.m. Central Time), on Wednesday, January 27, 2010.

For more information on Florida’s 2010 Severe Weather Awareness Week go to [www.FloridaDisaster.org/SWAW2010](http://www.FloridaDisaster.org/SWAW2010).

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