Severe Weather possible for North Florida on Saturday

TALLAHASSEE - An intense storm system diving into the Southeast this weekend will increase the threat for severe weather across North Florida on Saturday into Saturday night. A squall line of strong to severe thunderstorms is forecast to develop over Alabama and Mississippi on Saturday morning ahead of a strengthening cold front that will plunge through the state this weekend. Severe weather or tornado watches may be issued on Saturday and Saturday night for much of North Florida.

The Storm Prediction Center has placed the northern third of the state in a slight risk for severe weather Saturday. Damaging wind gusts, hail, isolated tornadoes, frequent lightning strikes, and briefly heavy downpours are possible on Saturday along the Interstate 10 corridor, with activity moving into north-central Florida during the overnight hours into Sunday morning. The severe weather threat is expected to diminish on Sunday as the front moves through Central and South Florida. Freezing temperatures are expected to return across much of North Florida on Monday and Tuesday mornings.

“We are encouraging residents and businesses to monitor this weather system this weekend and be prepared to act if warnings are issued,” said State Meteorologist Ben Nelson. “A NOAA Weather radio can be a lifesaver especially during nighttime events.”

Dangerous fire weather conditions are forecast for Sunday afternoon and Monday behind this cold front as gusty northwesterly winds and a much drier air mass funnels into the Sunshine State. Floridians are reminded to use caution when using flames outdoors. For more firewise safety tips go to: www.firewise.org

February and March are historically the peak months of Florida’s severe weather season. Many of these severe weather outbreaks occur at night during this time of the year. Residents and visitors to the state are urged to monitor this severe weather potential via local media or your local National Weather Service Office, and be sure that the alert settings on your family or business NOAA weather radio are turned on.

For more information on the Florida Division of Emergency Management and to GET A PLAN!, please visit: www.FloridaDisaster.org.

All students, teachers and parents can find educational information and free downloadable materials at: www.KidsGetAPlan.com.

And for the latest daily situation and flash reports go to: www.YouTube.com/FloridaSERT.

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