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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**March 10, 2026**

**Severe Weather Awareness Week**

*Encourages Preparedness Across Northern Michigan*

The Benzie-Leelanau District Health Department (BLDHD), in partnership with the Northern Michigan Public Health Alliance (NMPHA), are encouraging residents to prepare for severe weather during Severe Weather Awareness Week, taking place March 15–21, 2026.

As part of the week, a voluntary statewide tornado drill will be held on Tuesday, March 18, at 1:00 p.m. Communities, schools, workplaces, and families are encouraged to participate by practicing their emergency plans and discussing what to do when severe weather strikes.

Michigan experiences a wide range of severe weather, including tornadoes, thunderstorms, flooding, extreme heat, and winter storms. These events can happen quickly and with little warning, making preparedness an important step in protecting lives and property.

“Severe weather can happen anywhere in Michigan, and being prepared ahead of time makes a real difference,” said Dan Thorell, Health Officer for the Benzie-Leelanau District Health Department. “Taking just a few minutes to review your emergency plan or participate in the tornado drill can help keep families safer when it matters most.”

BLDHD and NMPHA encourage residents to use Severe Weather Awareness Week to:

- Identify safe places in homes, schools, and workplaces
- Review emergency plans and communication methods
- Assemble or update emergency supply kits
- Sign up for local weather alerts

Residents are also encouraged to consider volunteering during emergencies by joining the Michigan Volunteer Registry (MVR). The MVR helps connect trained volunteers with organizations and agencies during emergencies and disasters, strengthening community response efforts statewide.

More information about Severe Weather Awareness Week, preparedness tips, and emergency planning resources are available at [www.michigan.gov/miready](http://www.michigan.gov/miready). Information about the Michigan Volunteer Registry can be found at [www.mivolunteerregistry.org](http://www.mivolunteerregistry.org).

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