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PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE DISTRIBUTION

**SPALDING COUNTY OFFICE OF HOMELAND SECURITY
ANNOUNCES PREPAREATHON FOR THE ANNUAL
SEVERE WEATHER AWARENESS WEEK**



Spring in Spalding County brings budding leaves and new flowers. Unfortunately, it also brings violent thunderstorms and tornadoes. Spalding County's Office of Homeland Security will be conducting a "**Ready Spalding**" PrepareAthon! Drill for Tornado Safety county-wide on **Wednesday, February 7**.

While everyone knows the importance of being prepared, the purpose of this drill is to ensure that all Spalding County residents know exactly what to do should a tornado hit your location. This county-wide drill is being held as part of the Georgia's Severe Weather Preparedness Week and is supported by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the Georgia Emergency Management (GEMA) and the Homeland Security's "*Ready Georgia*" campaign. Here's how to participate:

Before the Drill:

- Register for the [Civic Ready](#) emergency notification system and choose what type of alerts you want to receive
- Install a [NOAA Weather Radio](#), if you haven't already done so. Make sure it's programmed to receive alerts for Spalding County and check that it has a battery back-up
- Review your severe weather emergency plan with your organization or family and encourage them to learn how to [prepare for tornadoes](#).
- Make sure everyone knows where tornado shelter areas are located. Basements and interior rooms or hallways on the lowest floor are safest

Around 9:00 a.m. the Day of the Drill:

- Listen for the tornado sirens or monitor your NOAA Weather Radio for the message from the National Weather Service. This is your cue to begin the drill
- If you are conducting the drill at your workplace, announce the drill using your building's notification system

- Follow the steps in your emergency plan
- Everyone should proceed to their tornado shelter area
 - Use stairs instead of elevators
- Crouch low, sitting or kneeling against a wall and covering head with hands
- Take a photo and share on your social media platforms using #PrepareAthon

After the Drill:

- Evaluate the drill and document any issues. Modify your plan accordingly.
- Email the number of participants and photos to gpolk@spaldingcounty.com

***For questions or assistance, please contact the
Spalding County Office of Homeland Security
at (770) 228-2129.***

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