

ECHO Script

Emergency, Community, Health and Outreach



Script: FINAL (Pre-Prep)

Date: FEB 6, 2013

ECHO Digital Short

“Stay Alert Using Weather Radios”

Finalized Script Deadline: February 7, 2013

Flesch-Kincaid grade reading level: 8.4 | Total words: 779

-1- Guest on camera, in a weather lab.

Hi, my name is _____, and I want to tell you about using weather radios to keep you and your family safe during an emergency. Severe weather can happen any time, and often without much warning. It’s important to be ready for weather and other situations that could affect you and your family.

-2- Severe weather, TV, radio, computer, smart phone, siren.

In any emergency, you need as much information as you can get, from as many places as you can get it. Outdoor warning sirens, television, radio, internet and even text alerts can provide lifesaving information. But any of those can suddenly go away, especially during a storm. TV and radio signals get disrupted. Internet goes down. Electrical power goes out. You don’t hear the siren, or don’t know what it means. So don’t rely on just one source.

-3- Old NWS photos, weather radio, severe weather, radar screen, radio antenna tower.

Forty years ago, the National Weather Service created a radio alert system to warn people of weather emergencies. The goal was to share local emergency weather information very quickly to people located in that area. It was a real help in weather emergencies, and it’s been working all over the United States ever since. And in that time, technology and weather forecasting have improved, and this weather radio system is better and more useful than ever.

-4- Severe weather, weather radio

The weather radio system is for alerting people to IMMEDIATE weather threats, like thunderstorms, tornadoes and flash floods. It shares weather information that could threaten you in the next few minutes to hours. So if your weather radio shares an alert, it’s happening near you, right now or very soon.

-5- NWR US coverage map, key words on screen

The weather radio service covers about 95% of the US population. Alerts are only in English. If you do not understand English fluently, it’s important that you understand certain words and know what to do in each emergency. In Minnesota, the most common weather emergencies are tornadoes, thunderstorms and flash floods.

-6- Severe weather background, key words on screen.

There are two important types of severe weather alerts you need to know. Sometimes alerts are issued for a “watch”, such as a tornado watch. A “watch” is when the conditions are right for that type of weather emergency to happen, but it hasn’t happened yet in your area. The other type of alert is a “warning”. Warnings are issued when that weather threat is happening in your area. “Watch” means, “be ready for an emergency”, “warning” means, “the emergency is happening now, and you must take action”.

-7- Guest on screen, in a weather lab.

Before severe weather strikes, designate one room or area in your home as the “safe place”. When high wind or tornadoes threaten, the safest place is in a basement. If you don’t have a basement, the best place is an interior room on the lowest floor, away from windows and outside doors.

-8- Weather radio close-ups, modes

Many weather radios have two modes. One mode will share ongoing weather reports, even in non-emergencies, 24 hours a day. In alarm mode, the radio remains silent until there is a weather emergency in your area. At that time, it will automatically turn itself on, and sound an alarm and share important information for your area. Not all weather radios are the same, so not all of them have these modes. Remember, if your weather radio sounds an alarm, it’s not for tomorrow or the next day, it’s an emergency happening right now very near you.

-9- Person setting up weather radio, batteries, AC power, configuration.

Weather radios are electronic devices. To work right, they must be set up for your area, and be plugged in or have batteries in them, or both. If your weather radio isn’t ready, you might not get information that could save your life. Keep it ready. Some radios can configure themselves to find your local weather radio frequency, but others may not. To configure your weather radio, you should know what county you live in.

-10- Weather radio with LCD screen.

Since they were first invented, weather radios are more useful than ever. Many weather radios have a screen that shows the nature of the weather emergency in your area, such as tornado, flash flood or thunderstorm.

-11- Weather radio antenna tower, non-weather emergency b-roll.

Sometimes the weather radio service is used to share information about non-weather emergencies. These could include things like a chemical spill, wild fire or other threats in your area.

-12- MN coverage map.

A few small areas in rural Minnesota do not get weather radio reception. And even in areas with generally good reception, some low-lying areas may not get it. This is another reason not to rely on any single source of information during an emergency, including weather radio. Still, safety experts agree that weather radios are a crucial piece of lifesaving equipment and should be in every home.

-13- Guest on camera, in a weather lab.

I hope this helps you understand weather radios, and how to use them to keep you and your family safe. Be healthy. Be ready. Be safe. Thanks for watching.