

# Severe Weather Terms

**Advisory** - A message released by the hurricane center, usually at six-hour intervals, updating information on a tropical depression, tropical storm or hurricane, including watches and warnings whenever they are in effect. A special advisory is given any time there is a significant change in weather conditions or a change in warnings previously released. An intermediate advisory updates information in advisories at two to three hour intervals, whenever a watch or warning is in effect.

**Flash Floods** – Heavy rain associated with thunderstorms

**Gale Warning** - Storm with non-cyclonic winds of 30 to 54 MPH expected.

**Hurricane** - A tropical storm with winds of 74 MPH or more.

**Hurricane Season** - June 1 through November 30 is officially designated as Hurricane Season.

**Hurricane Warning** - A hurricane is expected to strike your area within 24 hours with sustained winds of 74 MPH or more accompanied by heavy rain and high waves.

**Hurricane Watch** - The alert given when a hurricane poses a threat to a certain coastal area within 36 hours.

**Lightning** – Lightning comes from within a thunderstorm. It can strike miles from a parent cloud.

**Severe Thunderstorms** – Severe thunderstorms contain winds of more than 58 mph and/or hail of  $\frac{3}{4}$  inches or more in diameter.

**Severe Thunderstorm Warning** – A severe thunderstorm has been sighted or indicated by radar.

**Small Craft Warning** - When a tropical storm or hurricane threatens a coastal area, small craft are advised to remain in port and not to venture into the open sea.

**Storm Surge** - A rise in tides caused by a tropical storm or hurricane as it moves over or near the coastline. It can be much higher than the normal tidal rise, with breaking waves on top.

**Storm Warning** - Storm with non-cyclonic winds of 55 to 73 MPH expected.

**Tornado** – Tornadoes are violent rotating columns of air. They move with a land speed of 5 to 65 mph, their internal velocity may range from 60-500 mph. They may stay on the ground for only a few blocks or have a path of many miles.

**Tornado Watch** - Tornados and severe thunderstorms are possible in your area.

**Tornado Warning** - Tornado detected in your area “TAKE SHELTER”.

**Tropical Depression** - An area of low pressure, rotary circulation of clouds and winds of 38 MPH.

**Tropical Disturbance** - A moving area of thunderstorms in the tropics.

**Tropical Storm** - Counterclockwise circulation of clouds and winds, 39 to 73 MPH. The storm is assigned a name.