

What is the difference between a weather watch and a warning?

Storm season is rolling in, which means the news will be dominated with weather advisories, watches and warnings. While all these terms cover exceptional weather events, they differ in meaning and severity. It is the responsibility of Environment and Climate Change Canada to issue Advisories, Watches and Warnings.

Advisories

Advisories and weather statements can be used to cover a wide array of deteriorating weather conditions and are frequently used to describe weather events that can be cause for public concern.

Advisories and weather statements can be issued before watches and warnings or they can be issued to indicate severe weather in a long-term forecast.

Watches

Watches are issued when there is the potential for severe weather.

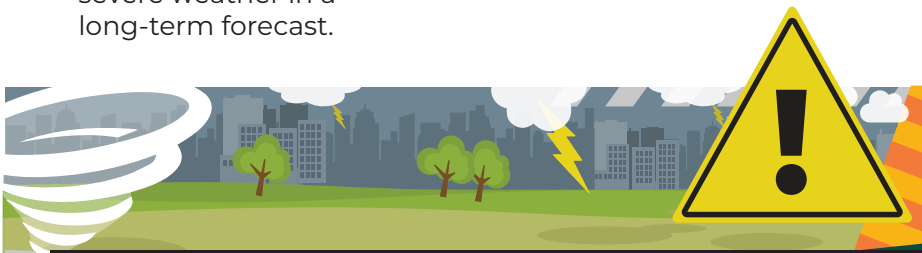
When conditions indicate severe weather is forming, a watch will be released to make the public aware of what could happen.

Warnings

A warning is the next step in the process.

Warnings are issued when that severe weather is actually occurring or is imminent.

For example, a tornado watch would mean there is a good chance that a tornado will form in the affected area, whereas a tornado warning would mean a tornado is occurring or about to occur and those in the region should take cover immediately.



Identifying Watches and Warnings

Tornado Watches occur when conditions favorable for a severe thunderstorm with a tornado are imminent.

Tornado Warnings occur when a tornado has been reported or there is evidence a tornado is imminent.

Severe Thunderstorm Watch is issued if there is the potential for the development of a thunderstorm with either wind gusts of 90 kilometres an hour or greater, hail with a diameter of two centimetres or greater, or heavy rainfall (with 50 millimetres or more within one hour).

Severe Thunderstorm Warning would be issued if a cell was spotted on radar with one or more of the weather conditions listed above occurring.

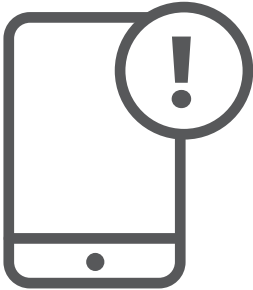


london.ca/emergency



Helpful applications in emergency preparedness

Alert Ready – Canada's Emergency Alert System



Alert Ready is a nationwide emergency alert system issued by authorized government agencies designed to inform Canadians about emergency concerns in their areas with an alert sent to your phone by text, television or radio. Wireless providers have also collaborated with the government to allow text messages to be sent to mobile devices across Canada, provided that they are connected to a 4G network. Alerts will go out for Tornado warnings, severe thunderstorms with winds over 130km/hr, and hail bigger than 7cm.

Test messages may be sent to your device to ensure that the Alert Ready system is up and running. You can learn about the test schedule in your area through the Alert Ready website.

If you receive a notification you should take shelter immediately.

Alert London



The City of London has implemented an emergency mass notification system to alert Londoners during a community-wide emergency. This notification system allows the City greater efficiency in helping to distribute timely information and instructions exactly where they are needed. In the event of a large scale emergency, Alert London will provide critical public safety messages. The system is designed to reach you at your preferred point of contact (text or voice), using the information you use to register online.

WeatherCAN



Receive weather alert notifications in your area, as well as in your saved locations, wherever you are in Canada. Get your latest forecast information directly from Canada's official weather source

Check Environment Canada's website for forecasts, radar, warnings, and links to other weather related information at weather.gc.ca

For more tips on emergency preparedness:
london.ca/emergency
ontario.ca/emo
GetPrepared.ca

