

DEFINITIONS AND TERMINOLOGY

Weather-related Terms:

Severe Thunderstorm Watch

Severe thunderstorms are possible. Conditions could develop producing high winds and damaging rain. Stay tuned to the radio or TV for further information.

Severe Thunderstorm Warning

Severe thunderstorms have been detected and are moving to your area. Take shelter. Continue to stay tuned to the radio for further information.

Tornado Watch

Tornadoes and severe thunderstorms are possible. Conditions are such that a tornado could develop. Stay tuned to the radio or TV for further information.

Tornado Warning

Tornado detected. Take shelter immediately. Stay tuned with battery operated radio.

Winter Storm Watch

This means that conditions are right for the development of severe winter weather in the area described by the watch. This is the period when Ashland County residents should be making arrangements about what to do in case severe winter storms should strike. Supplies of food and fuel are the main essentials, but officials advise that your items should include safety and survival equipment as well.

Winter Storm Warning

This is used when severe winter weather is imminent within the area described in the warning. Factors involved in severe winter weather include snow of four (4) inches or more within a 12-hour period, or six (6) inches or more in a 24-hour period, damaging amounts of freezing rain or drizzle, significant amounts of heavy sleet or general blizzard conditions.

Emergency-related Terms:

Bacteria

Bacteria are single-celled microorganisms that are relatively self-sufficient and reproduce rapidly. Ex. Anthrax, Plague, Tularemia.

Biological Agents

Biological Agents are living organisms (bacteria, viruses) or toxins (poisons produced by plants or bacteria) that tend to be more lethal than chemical weapons.

Chemical Weapons

Chemical Weapons are compounds with unique properties that produce lethal or damaging effects in man, animals and plants. Chemical Weapons can exist in solids, liquids or gases. Ex. Persistent agents are those that remain a hazard and continue to contaminate for more than 24 hours after release. Ex. Vesicant mustard and nerve agent VX. Non-persistent usually dissipate in less than 24 hours. Ex. Nerve agents, chlorine, cyanide.

Terrorism

Terrorism is the unlawful use of force or violence against persons or property to intimidate or coerce a government of civilian population in furtherance of political or social objectives.

Toxins

Toxins are poisons of biological origin. They are non-living. They are chemically defined substances for a wide variety of sources. Although many toxins occur in nature, very few are suitable for Weapons of Mass Destruction. Ex. Botulism, Ricin, Staphylococcus Enterotoxin B.

Viruses

A virus must have a host. Unlike bacteria, they do not take in nutrients. They grow by infecting and taking over the cell and killing that cell. Ex. Ebola, Yellow Fever, and Smallpox.

Weapons of Mass Destruction and Terrorism-related Terms:**Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD)**

The use of nuclear, biological or chemical (NBC) weapons by terrorists to inflict large numbers of casualties.

Terrorism Incident Plan: Federal Level

On February 7, 1997, FEMA published the Terrorism Annex to the Federal Response Plan. This document describes the Federal concept of operations to terrorism.

While this list includes many important terms, there are some terms that are not listed. If you feel that there are other terms we should list, please contact us at your earliest convenience. As The Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management Agency works hard to help Ashland County residents have the education they need in the event of an emergency.