

# Weather Watch

## If Bad Weather Bugs You, Your Computer May Help

(NAPSA)—A chirping sound coming from your computer may some day save your life.

The sound is sent by a downloadable application called WeatherBug to let you know when the National Weather Service issues a severe weather warning. That can give you the time you need to secure yourself, your loved ones and your property.

Whether it's blizzards in the Northeast, tornadoes on the Central plains, hurricanes in the South, drought in the West or any of the other severe conditions various parts of the country have been experiencing lately, modern technology can make it easier to monitor fast-moving weather so you're as prepared as possible.

The free WeatherBug program is powered by a unique network of 6,000 weather monitoring stations based at schools, television stations and other civil locations.

It gives you live, neighborhood weather conditions and local weather reports as well as severe weather alerts. There are one-click travel forecasts, live camera images, advanced color radar and more. A premium, advertising-free version called WeatherBug Pro is available for a \$19.95 annual fee.

"The real value of WeatherBug during severe weather is the chirp," said meteorologist Mark Hoekzema. "Users may be in a different room from their computer, but when they hear this recognizable sound they will know to immediately check their WeatherBug to find out what severe weather is approaching."



**Everybody talks about the weather. Now, it's possible to download free computer software to warn you in time to do something about it.**

"It's a huge improvement in the tools that most people use to monitor severe weather," Hoekzema added, "and it's already helped countless people get out of harm's way."

In addition to knowing what weather troubles may be coming your way, it pays to be prepared to face them. The experts at the American Red Cross suggest these steps:

- Post emergency telephone numbers by phones. Be sure youngsters know how to call 9-1-1.
- Know how and when to turn off utilities.
- Install smoke detectors on each level of your home, especially near bedrooms.
- Stock emergency supplies and assemble a Disaster Supplies Kit.
- Take a Red Cross first aid and CPR class.
- Determine the best escape routes from your home.
- Find the safe places in your home for each type of disaster.

You can learn more on this subject at [www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org). For more information on WeatherBug, visit [www.weatherbug.com](http://www.weatherbug.com).