

*Entry deadline is Feb. 26.*

The springtime severe weather season is quickly approaching and that means it's time for the annual 2010 Nebraska Severe Weather Awareness Poster Contest.

The contest, sponsored by Nebraska Association of Emergency Management, the National Weather Service and the Nebraska Emergency Management Agency, is part of the annual Severe Weather Awareness Week effort produced by emergency management directors across Nebraska.

The poster contest is open to all fourth-grade students in Nebraska public and private schools as well as home-schooled fourth-grade students.

Teachers are encouraged to have their students participate while teaching them about the hazards of severe weather in Nebraska.

While not specifically designed to promote tornado awareness, tornadoes are the most common theme chosen for the posters.

Lightning and flooding, which are also products of severe thunderstorms, are also good topic choices.

The first-place winner in the state contest is awarded a \$200 U.S. Savings Bond. The second-place winner receives a \$150 bond and third place wins a \$100 bond. The Nebraska Association of Emergency Management furnishes all the bonds. The fourth-place poster winner receives a \$50 prize sponsored by the National Weather Service.

Contest rules are as follows:

1. Poster artists must be a fourth-grade pupil in any Nebraska private, public or home school.
2. Entries must be related to the theme of severe weather safety and will be judged on originality, effort and accuracy. All entries must be on an 11" x 17" sheet of white paper. Any medium may be used (crayon, paint, markers, etc.). Only one entry is allowed per pupil and no joint entries (posters by more than one person) will be accepted.
3. Each school is encouraged to conduct the contest. All entries must be delivered to your local emergency management director/coordinator on or before Feb. 26, 2010.
4. Each entry must include student name, age, complete home address, home telephone number, name of school, location of school and school phone number on the back side of the entry.
5. Teachers are encouraged to contact the local emergency management director to assist in the selection of the top three (3) entries from their school. If the local director is unavailable or unknown, please contact Mark Meints, Poster Contest Chairman, (402) 223-1305.
6. First-, second-, third- and fourth-place winners will be chosen. All winners will be notified by telephone or mail. Prizes are first place, \$200 Savings Bond; second place, \$150 bond; third place, \$100 bond and fourth place, \$50 cash. The four winners and their parents will be invited to the State Capitol on Thursday, March 13 for the presentation of their awards by Nebraska Gov. Dave Heineman.

7. Any questions regarding the 2009 Severe Weather Poster Contest should be directed to the local emergency management director/coordinator or to Mark Meints at (402) 223-1305, email <gagecoema@diodecom.net>.

Deadline for entries to be returned to local emergency management directors is Feb. 26. Posters will be judged during the first week of March by the Nebraska Association of Emergency Management president and representatives from the National Weather Service and the Nebraska Emergency Management Agency.

Awards will be presented by Nebraska Gov. Dave Heineman at the State Capitol in Lincoln on March 10 at 10:30 a.m.