



MWS STORM CENTER

New Categorical Risk Levels

(Version 1)

A guide to understanding your risk of severe weather!

The following guide is designed to help you better understand your risk for severe weather. The categorical risks have recently been expanded to provide an increased awareness when severe storms are forecast.

| Categorical Level | Probabilities | Impacts |
|---|--|---|
| (General Thunderstorms) No label | None | Gusty winds to 40 mph and lightning. |
| <i>(LTMD) Limited Risk</i> | 5% or less. Coverage of thunderstorms will be quite isolated in nature and low intensity. | * Marginally severe hail from ½ to 1.00 inch is possible. * Marginally severe wind gusts to 55 mph is possible. |
| <i>(SLGT) Slight Risk</i> | 15-25% Coverage of thunderstorms will be isolated in nature, and many locations not seeing any storms at all. | * Hail to 1.00 inch or larger possible. * Damaging wind gusts to 58 mph or greater possible. * A few isolated tornadoes possible. |
| <i>Elevated Risk</i> | 25-35% Coverage of thunderstorms will be enhanced by isolated-scattered activity. | * Large diameter hail from 1.00 inch or larger expected. * Damaging wind gusts from 60-70 mph expected. * Scattered tornadoes possible. |
| <i>(MDT) Moderate Risk</i> | 35-45% Scattered-numerous thunderstorm coverage with strong intensity. | ** All facets of severe weather is likely, including strong-intense tornadoes, or significant damaging wind event. |
| <i>(HIGH) High Risk</i> | 50% or higher Widespread coverage and intensity. | ** All facets of severe weather is highly likely. Severe damage likely. |

(Note):

Each contour represents where severe storms are expected within 25 miles of any given location. General thunderstorm contours do not have any labels.

(**) In high risk situations, the impacts may be extreme since this generally implies a “widespread major” outbreak of either tornadoes or significant Derecho events. You are strongly advised to remain fully alert and prepared for any signs of severe weather. Such severe weather can and generally does happen very quickly in moderate and high risk situations.

The National Weather Service classifies a thunderstorm as “severe” when it contains some or all of the following:

- 1 - Large diameter hail - (1.00 inch or greater)
- 2 - Damaging winds - (58 mph or higher)
- 3 - Tornadoes (any intensity)

For more information about this guide, or other safety issues, log onto our web site at:

<http://midwestweather.net>



MWS STORM CENTER

New Categorical Risk Levels

(Version 2)

A guide to understanding your risk of severe weather!

| General Thunderstorms (No label) | Limited Risk (5% or less probability) | Slight Risk (15-25% probabilities) | Elevated Risk (25-35% probabilities) | Moderate Risk (35-50% probabilities) | High Risk (50% or higher probabilities) |
|---|--|--|---|--|--|
| This contour shows areas of non-severe thunderstorms. No severe threat is expected. | This contour shows areas of strong-severe thunderstorms. The overall severe threat is minimal. | This contour shows areas of widely isolated severe thunderstorms. The overall threat is low due coverage of storms. | This contour shows areas of isolated-scattered severe thunderstorms. Threat is enhanced due to coverage of storms expected. | This contour shows areas of scattered to numerous severe thunderstorms. Threat is medium-high due to coverage and intensity of storms. | This contour shows areas of widespread numerous severe thunderstorms. Threat is extreme due to coverage and intensity of storms. |
| Wind gusts to 40 mph and frequent lightning are the main hazards. | * Hail from ½ to 1 inch in diameter is possible. * Wind gusts up to 55 mph is possible. * Frequent dangerous lightning likely. | * Large hail 1 inch or larger is possible. * Damaging winds of 58 mph or greater is possible. * A few isolated tornadoes possible. | * Large hail 1 inch or larger is expected. * Damaging winds of 60-70 mph is expected. * Scattered tornadoes possible. | ** All facets of severe weather is likely. This also includes strong to intense tornadoes, or significant wind damage. | ** All facets of severe weather is highly likely! This includes major long track tornadoes, or widespread Derecho events. |
| No impacts to society expected. | Some minor impacts to buildings, vehicles, and trees. | Structural damage to buildings. Trees and power lines toppled. Vehicles damaged. | Significant damage may occur to buildings, trees, power lines, and vehicles. | Widespread significant damage is expected. Especially true in intense tornadoes. | Impacts to society will be major or extreme. Buildings, trees, power lines, and vehicles devastated. |

(Note):

(*) In moderate and high risk situations, the impacts may be extreme since this generally implies a “*widespread major*” outbreak of either tornadoes or significant Derecho events. You are strongly advised to remain fully alert and prepared for any signs of severe weather. Such severe weather can and generally does happen very quickly in moderate and high risk situations.

The National Weather Service classifies a thunderstorm as “severe” if it contains some or all of the following:

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