

Strong Tornado Season Could Be Ahead for 2009

By StormChase.com

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Weather forecasters from StormChase.com release statement that a strong tornado season is expected throughout the spring and summer months of 2009.

Norman, OK – Meteorologist and storm chasers are gearing up for what may be the most active tornado season in over 10 years, according to private meteorologist with StormChase.com of Norman, Oklahoma.

According to the National Weather Service's Storm Prediction Center, also in Norman, OK, 10 tornadoes were reported in the US during January, the lowest reported for the month in over 4 years.

Meteorologist Sarah Kogler, 31, says that the low frequency for tornadoes last month may create a false hope with the public and they shouldn't let their guard down. "The big weather maker this January was winter weather, but combine the same upper-level dynamics that created those winter storms with the usual spring season return of moisture from the Gulf of Mexico and you've got a recipe for major thunderstorms to develop."

"We've seen several big weather makers this year already, notably the recent ice storm that spanned from central Texas to New England." StormChase.com's Brian Barnes, 34, said on Wednesday. "These systems have been in advance of very strong cold fronts and low-pressure systems sweeping down from Canada. If the same patterns persist into the spring we'll be seeing severe supercells and tornadoes as opposed to heavy snow and ice."

"Based on climate data, I suspect that this is going to be an extremely busy storm season and the tornado threat will be intense this spring." Barnes said in a statement.

"Historically, it's when we go through a low tornado frequency period when people drop their guard, and then the first big storm takes everyone by surprise." Said Barnes, "That's when we see tornado related fatalities increase dramatically."

Barnes further stated that this is the time when everyone needs to check the batteries in their weather radios and go over their tornado preparedness plans with their family. "Once the tornado is across the street from your home, it's a little late for those things."

StormChase.com includes a tornado and safety information section where people can find links to great resources available on the Internet from various sources to help create a tornado preparedness plan, purchase a weather radio or learn about tornadoes.

Forecasters also predict a busy hurricane season.

The Colorado State University team led by Dr. William Gray, a pioneer in forecasting hurricane probabilities, said they expected 14 named storms to form in the Atlantic basin during the six-month season starting in June.

Seven of the storms will likely strengthen into hurricanes, with winds of at least 74 mph, the team said in their early prediction during December.

The forecasters said three of the hurricanes were likely to be major storms, reaching at least Category 3 on the five-step Saffir-Simpson scale of hurricane intensity, and boasting winds of at least 111 mph. And there was a 63% chance of at least one major hurricane striking the United States.

StormChase.com is an information source for storm chasers and owned by the tornado chasing tourism company StormTours.com.

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