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First tornado watch of 2011 issued

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Nebraska City News Press

Posted Mar 22, 2011 @ 02:17 PM

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Nebraska City, Neb. — The National Weather Service announced the first tornado watch of the year at 2:08 p.m. Tuesday.

The watch, which extends to 9 p.m., includes the counties of Otoe, Johnson, Richardson and Pawnee, as well as counties in Iowa.

Gregg Goebel, Otoe County emergency management director, said the county's storm spotters have been activated and are preparing to deploy.

The emergency management office at the courthouse has been activated. Goebel said his office will monitor weather satellites and be in touch with the weather service to determine where the area of risks are.

Goebel said the number of tornado watches per year varies from season to season. He said Otoe County has had as few as four in a year and as many as 40.

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