

**The Hazards Caucus Alliance
Invites You to a Public Briefing**

Tornadoes: Understanding the Risks and Providing Early Warning

Sponsored by the American Geological Institute, American Geophysical Union,
American Society of Civil Engineers, and University Corporation for
Atmospheric Research

In Cooperation with the Congressional Hazards Caucus and Co-chairs Senators Mary
Landrieu, Lisa Murkowski and Ben Nelson and Representative
Zoe Lofgren

**Wednesday, June 15, 2011
Room - Russell 428A
Time - 2:30 pm**

There have been a large number of tornadoes in the continental U.S. this spring. Unfortunately some very intense tornadoes have struck a direct path through populated areas causing fatalities, injuries and significant damage. Efforts continue to understand how tornadoes form, how to improve forecasts and warnings, how to prepare and how to respond. This briefing will discuss the science, engineering, forecasting, warning, preparedness and response to tornadoes and how to reduce risks.

Moderator:

Martin Hight, American Society of Civil Engineers

Speakers:

Yvette Richardson, Associate Professor of Meteorology, Pennsylvania State
University

Jim Stefkovich, Meteorologist-In-Charge of NOAA's National Weather Service
Weather Forecast Office in Birmingham, AL

Marc Levitan, (*invited*) Director of R&D for the National Windstorm Impact
Reduction Program, National Institute of Standards and Technology

Yvette Richardson's research interests are in theoretical severe storm dynamics, cloud and mesoscale modeling, fluid mechanics, convective initiation, and radar observations of thunderstorms and tornadoes. She was a co-coordinator of the mobile mesonets on the VORTEX2 mission. She has also participated in several field projects, such as VORTEX, ROTATE-2000, ROTATE-2001, and IHOP-2002. She can be seen in Sean Casey's new documentary, "Tornado Alley". Richardson earned her Bachelor's in Physics from the University of Wisconsin-River Falls, and her Master's and Doctoral degrees in Meteorology from the University of Oklahoma.

Jim Stefkovich launched his career at the NOAA's National Weather Service National Weather Service Techniques Development Laboratory in Silver Spring, MD as a student trainee/computer programmer. Since then, he has served as a meteorological observer at the Weather Service Meteorological Observation site in Waycross, GA, became a forecaster at the Atlanta, GA, and served as the warning coordination meteorologist at the Weather Forecast Office in Fort Worth, TX. He later became the meteorologist-in-charge of the Weather Forecast Offices in Jackson, MS, and Chicago, IL. Stefkovich is a recipient of a Bronze Medal for superior service during hurricane and tornado outbreaks. He has served on several National Weather Service teams, including the Service Assessment Team for the deadly April 1998 tornadoes in Alabama and Georgia and was the Meteorologist-In-Charge during the recent April 2011 Alabama tornado outbreak. Stefkovich earned a bachelor's degree in meteorology from Pennsylvania State University.

Marc Levitan leads R&D to improve model codes, standards, design guidance, and practices for the construction and rehabilitation of buildings, structures, and lifelines. Levitan's R&D program will support the development of instrumentation, data processing, archival capabilities, and standards for the instrumentation and its deployment, to measure wind, wind loading, and other properties of severe wind and structural response; improve knowledge of the impact of severe wind on buildings, structures, lifelines, and communities; develop cost-effective windstorm impact reduction tools, methods, and technologies; work, in conjunction with private sector organizations and other appropriate Federal agencies, to support the development of wind standards, model codes, and better building practices. Levitan was the founding Director of the Louisiana State University Hurricane Center and before that the Managing Director of the Wind Engineering Research Field Laboratory at Texas Tech University. He received his Bachelor's, Master's and Doctoral degrees in Civil Engineering from Texas Tech.

The Hazards Caucus Alliance, an informal network of organizations concerned about reducing the risk of hazards – www.hazardscaucus.org, invites your participation in this briefing and in future events. For more information, please contact Linda Rowan 703-379-2480 ext. 228; rowan@agiweb.org.