

# DAILY PREPAREDNESS BRIEF

Household Edition | Fortune Favors the Prepared

A plain-language readiness brief for families



## ⚠️ PREPAREDNESS CONDITION 3 — INCIDENT PROBABLE — Brown Sky ⚠️

Wednesday, 20 May 2026 | Op Epic Fury Day 82 | Hormuz Blockade Day 38 | LBN CF Day 35 | Trend: STABLE

## COMMUNICATIONS CONDITION: COMCON 4 — INCIDENT POSSIBLE — Orange Sky

## WEATHER: WX-CON 2 — SLGT — Storms Mid-Atlantic and Texas; flash-flood risk SW Texas

## SPACE WEATHER: SWX-CON 1 — R1 (Minor) — Minor radio blackout

Publication (UTC)	20 MAY 2026 / 1530 UTC
Reporting Period	19-MAY through 20-MAY (24h daily rollup)
SOP	v5.54   Source linkify complete   All hooks PASSED

## WHAT TO DO THIS WEEK

### Five small actions you can take in under an hour each

- 1. Test your home weather alerting tonight.** If you live in southwest Texas, severe storms and a flash-flood risk are expected through Thursday; if you are in the central Appalachians, Mid-Atlantic, or southern New England, severe storms with damaging winds are expected this afternoon and evening. Confirm Wireless Emergency Alerts are ON in your phone settings. Download the [FEMA App](#) if you don't have it. If you have a [NOAA Weather Radio](#) receiver, test it now.
- 2. Check your shelter plan.** If you live in southwest Texas including the Hill Country and Edwards Plateau, or in the central Appalachians, Mid-Atlantic, or southern New England: identify your interior room or basement now and, in Texas, know your high-water routes. Severe weather is expected through this evening, with the Texas flash-flood threat continuing into Thursday.
- 3. Top off the gas tank by Friday.** Gas prices are stable today but the next 2-3 days carry tail risk from the US-Iran situation. National average is \$4.36 per gallon; if the situation escalates, prices could rise 8-15 cents in 3-5 days.
- 4. Refresh your phone's offline maps.** If a storm cuts cell service or GPS gets briefly fuzzy from solar weather tonight, you want maps cached. [Google Maps](#) lets you download a region for offline use; do this from a wifi connection.
- 5. Check your software updates this week.** Several major cybersecurity issues are on federal patch deadlines this week. If you run Microsoft Exchange at your business or any [Cisco](#) SD-WAN equipment, make sure you're on the latest patches.

## THIS WEEK'S ONE THING

IF YOU ONLY DO ONE THING THIS WEEK:

## Verify your phone Wireless Emergency Alerts are turned ON.

A flash-flood risk is forecast for the Edwards Plateau of southwest Texas, with severe storms across the southern Plains. [NOAA Weather Radio](#) is offline or degraded in 15 states, including parts of the active corridor.

### THE SHORT VERSION

#### What's happening this week, in five sentences:

1. The US-Iran situation is at a decision point. A planned strike was paused last week; the window for a deal or a return to military action closes around 21-22 May. The Vice President said the US is still pursuing a deal but ready to act if talks fail.
2. Severe weather today covers two areas: the central Appalachians into the Mid-Atlantic and southern New England (damaging winds), and west and south-central Texas (large hail). A separate flash-flood risk covers the Edwards Plateau of southwest Texas through Thursday.
3. Gas prices are stable today but the next few days carry tail risk from the US-Iran situation. If it escalates, expect a rise of roughly 8-15 cents within 3-5 days.
4. Important cyber-security patches are on federal deadlines this week. If you run any business systems, ask your IT vendor about Palo Alto firewalls (deadline Thursday 21 May) and Microsoft Exchange (deadline May 29).
5. No public health emergency at the household level. The Andes hantavirus case from earlier this month remains under federal quarantine in Nebraska; sustained community spread is **very unlikely** through late June.

### TODAY'S IMPACTS AT A GLANCE

*What's happening today + what to do, by category.*

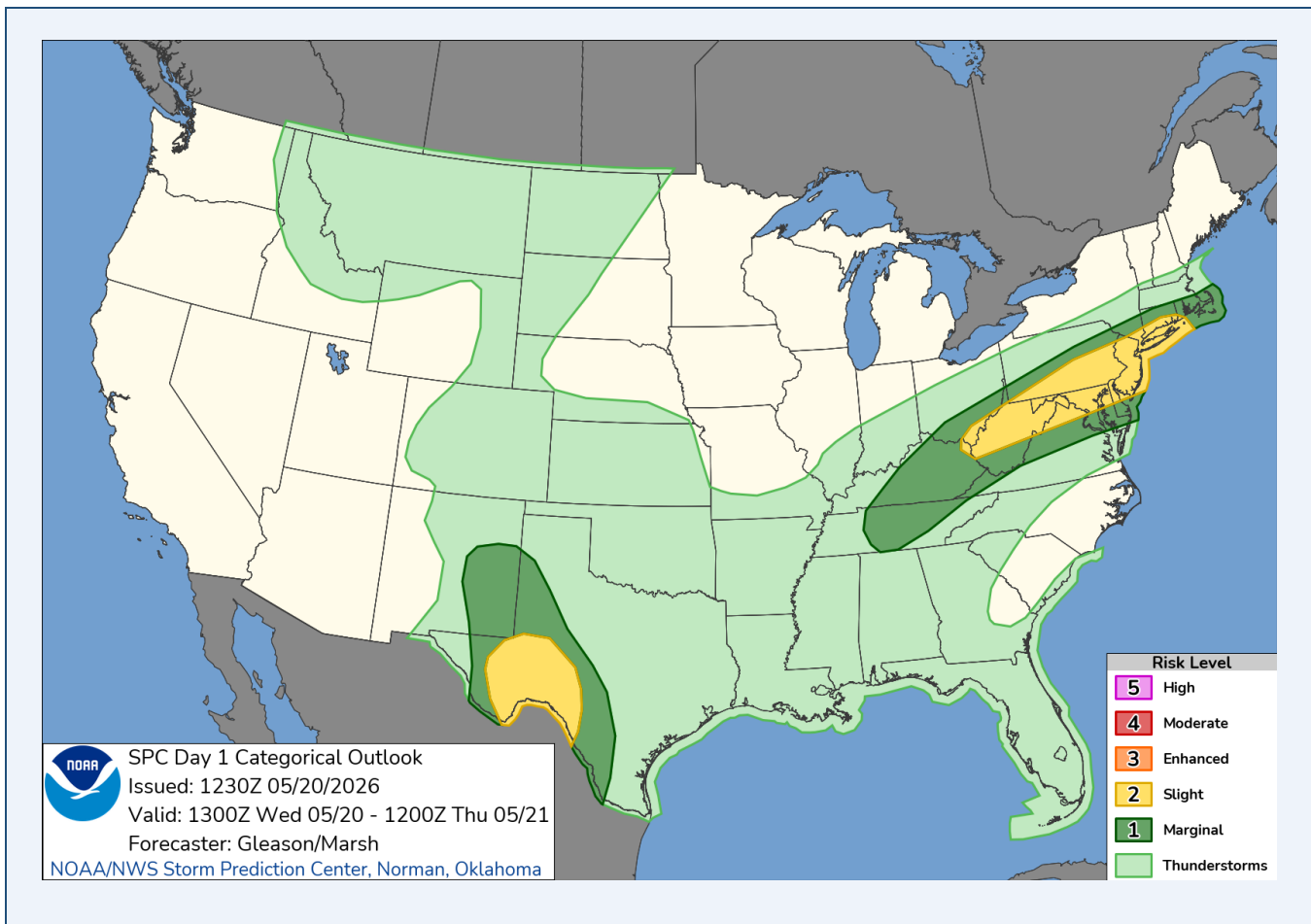
CATEGORY	WHAT'S HAPPENING	YOUR ACTION
<b>Weather</b>	Flash-flood risk for the Edwards Plateau of southwest Texas through Thursday. Severe storms across the central Appalachians/Mid-Atlantic (damaging winds) and west/south-central Texas (large hail).	Confirm shelter plan; phone alerts ON; pre-position drainage + power-out plans.
<b>Gas / Pump</b>	National average \$4.36/gal today; stable but tail risk from US-Iran situation over next 2-3 days.	Fill tank this week if low.
<b>Food / Groceries</b>	Stable. <a href="#">USDA</a> next crop report June 11. Wheat oversupply baseline holds; some bread/pasta moderation possible.	No urgent action.
<b>Communications</b>	<a href="#">NOAA Weather Radio</a> : 26 transmitters affected across 15 states. Gaps in or near the active storm corridor include KS Ulysses, IL Hillsboro, TN Shelbyville, TX Rio Grande City, and the New Mexico transmitters at Carlsbad, Roswell, and Artesia.	Use phone Wireless Emergency Alerts + FEMA App.
<b>Public Health</b>	Andes hantavirus case Day 7 in Nebraska biocontainment; zero second-generation	No household action.

	cases; <b>very unlikely</b> to affect general public.	
<b>GPS / Internet</b>	Minor radio blackout (R1) impacts current per <a href="#">NOAA</a> ; yesterday's minor geomagnetic storm watch has expired. Brief HF radio effects possible.	Download offline maps via wifi.

## WEATHER — WHERE IT MATTERS THIS WEEK

REGION	HAZARD	WHAT TO DO
<b>SW Texas / Edwards Plateau</b>	Flash-flood risk through Thursday. Rainfall over 5 inches in 24 hours is possible; rates over 2 inches per hour possible overnight.	Stay weather-aware; know your high-water routes; never drive through flooded roads.
<b>West / South-Central Texas</b>	Slight Risk severe storms with large hail the main threat; supercells developing off the higher terrain.	Secure outdoor furniture and vehicles; park under cover if you can.
<b>Central Appalachians / Mid-Atlantic</b>	Slight Risk severe storms this afternoon and evening; scattered damaging winds the main threat.	Use phone alerts as primary. Secure loose outdoor items before evening.
<b>Southern New England</b>	Slight Risk for damaging winds with storms arriving later this afternoon into the evening.	Phone alerts as primary; check on neighbors without smartphones.
<b>Southern Plains through Ozarks</b>	Slight Risk for heavy rain Thursday into Friday. Multiple storm complexes on the same axis.	Plan now: shelter location, charged phones, supplies for 24-48h.
<b>Florida + Southeast</b>	No active severe-weather signals this week.	No action.

**Source:** [NOAA Storm Prediction Center](#) Day 1 and Day 4 outlooks; [NWS](#) regional forecast discussions.



## SPACE WEATHER & GPS — Quick Status

**Today (Wed 20 May):** National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's [Space Weather Prediction Center](#) shows R1 (Minor) radio blackout impacts current — weak HF radio degradation on the sunlit side of the Earth. Yesterday's minor geomagnetic storm watch has expired. Scale reference: [NOAA Space Weather Scales](#).

**Note:** [SWPC](#) reports its alert-notifications timeline is temporarily unreliable due to ongoing system upgrades.

**Household impact:** Most household uses of GPS and internet will work normally. Brief degradation of HF (shortwave) radio is possible on the daytime side. No action needed for typical households.

**Ham radio + emergency communications operators:** Expect weak or minor HF degradation on the sunlit side with occasional brief loss of contact. Lower bands and nighttime paths are the more reliable option if a daytime circuit fades.

**Looking ahead:** The Sun is fairly quiet on the side facing Earth right now, but space weather forecasters are tracking a large sunspot group on the far side that will rotate into view over the next several days. It could increase solar flare activity later this week, which would mean more shortwave radio disruption. Nothing to act on today; if you rely on HF radio, keep an eye on the forecast at [spaceweather.gov](#).

## SUPPLY CHAIN — What It Means at the Store

**Gas pump:** National average is \$4.36/gallon today, stable since Monday. The Iran situation creates a 2-3 day tail risk: if a deal is announced, expect a 3-5 cent decline within a week. If the strike resumes, expect 8-15 cents upward over 3-5 days.

**Bread + pasta:** Stable. The U.S. Department of Agriculture's May report shows a wheat oversupply baseline. Some south Texas field-access disruption is possible from this week's flash-flood risk, but the next [USDA](#) crop report is June 11.

**Shipping containers:** Hormuz Strait traffic remains at single-digit percent of pre-war volume; the US naval blockade is in its second month. Turkey's foreign minister has framed keeping the Strait open as the immediate negotiating concern. Goods routed through the Gulf may continue to see longer transit times and higher insurance costs.

**Travel:** Major European airlines continue Gulf-region flexibility through end of week. If you have travel booked to Dubai, Riyadh, or Beirut over the next 2-3 days, check with your airline before departure.

## CYBER, COMMS & LOCAL IMPACTS

**Government computer systems:** Multiple urgent cybersecurity bulletins this week from the U.S. [Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency](#). Federal agencies have until tomorrow, Thursday 21 May, to patch Palo Alto firewalls, and until 29 May to patch Microsoft Exchange email servers; the deadline for affected [Cisco](#) network equipment has already passed.

**Household impact:** Low. These are enterprise systems, not consumer devices. Keep your home devices updated (phones, laptops, router firmware). If you use a Palo Alto firewall in a home office, update it tonight.

**NOAA Weather Radio:** 26 transmitters affected across 15 states (15 fully out, 11 degraded), per a 20-MAY operator snapshot. The most relevant to this week's weather are TX Rio Grande City, which is out of service downstream of the Texas flash-flood area, and the New Mexico transmitters at Carlsbad, Roswell, and Artesia, which are near the west Texas storm threat.

**Workaround:** In affected areas, rely on phone Wireless Emergency Alerts (built into iPhone and Android), the [FEMA App](#), and local broadcast Emergency Alert System (television and AM/FM radio).

## SIGNALS THAT CONDITIONS ARE GETTING WORSE

**Watch for these in the news this week. If you see them, raise your readiness one notch.**

- The U.S. attacks Iran (the 2-3 day deal window closes around 21-22 May).
- A second strike on a commercial ship in the Persian Gulf or Strait of Hormuz.
- Israel strikes Beirut neighborhoods (Dahieh district is the bellwether).
- The Storm Prediction Center upgrades any day to HIGH RISK, or the flash-flood threat in Texas escalates.
- A second case of Andes hantavirus emerges outside the federal quarantine facility.
- A second U.S. cyber emergency directive issued in the same week.
- Follow-on detail from the Putin-Xi joint statement points to coordinated pressure on the U.S. or its allies over Iran or Taiwan.

## RESOURCES

### Sources for this brief + tools you can use at home

**Weather:** [NOAA Storm Prediction Center](#) | [NWS](#) | [NOAA Weather Radio outage status](#)

**Emergency alerts:** [FEMA App](#) (download to phone) | Wireless Emergency Alerts (turn ON in phone settings).

**Space weather:** [SWPC 3-Day Forecast](#) | [Geophysical Institute Aurora Forecast](#)

**Gas prices:** [AAA Daily National Average](#)

**Food + Agriculture:** [USDA WASDE Report](#)

**Public health:** [CDC Health Alert Network](#) | [WHO Disease Outbreak News](#)

**Cybersecurity:** [CISA Known Exploited Vulnerabilities catalog](#)

**Conditions reference:** [PREP-CON](#) | [COMCON](#) | [WX-CON](#) | [Space Weather](#).

**Analytical methodology:** [fortunefavorstheprepared.com / analytical-standards](#) (sourcing standards, estimative-language scale, risk-score formula, alt-hypothesis discipline).

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