

Progress toward developing a practical societal response to severe convection

Dr. Charles A. Doswell III

Senior Research Scientist, Cooperative Institute for Mesoscale Meteorological Studies,
Norman, Oklahoma USA

A short review of severe convection in the context of geophysical hazards is given. Societal responses to geophysical hazards depend, in part, on the ability to forecast the events and the degree of certainty with which forecasts can be made. In particular, the spatio-temporal specificity of those forecasts and their lead time are critical issues. However, societal responses to geophysical hazards are not only dependent on forecasting. Even perfect forecasts might not be sufficient without the development of considerable infrastructure to allow a society to respond properly and in time to mitigate the hazard. Geophysical hazards of extreme magnitude are rare events, which tends to make funding support for appropriate preparations difficult to obtain. Focusing on tornadoes, the infrastructure for dealing with them in the USA is reviewed. Worldwide implications of the experience in the USA are discussed, with an emphasis on its relevance to the situation in Europe.