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## NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE | CENTRAL ILLINOIS



D. JACK ALKIRE PHOTOS, THE PANTAGRAPH

Mike Albano, meteorologist with the National Weather Service in Lincoln, leads a storm spotting class on March 14 in the Emergency Operations Center in the basement of the McLean County Law and Justice Center. Trained storm spotters help NWS understand and communicate the severity of storms, helping to warn the public about potential dangers.

# EYES ON THE STORMS

Volunteers trained to ID severe weather beyond 'radar indicated'

D. JACK ALKIRE  
Daniel.Alkire@lee.net

BLOOMINGTON — The National Weather Service's radar system in Lincoln has a pretty large geographical scope.

"It goes out 120, 150 nautical miles," said Mike Albano, meteorologist with the regional weather office. "It's going to try and intercept or scatter different hydro meteorological targets, which is simply raindrops (or) hail. Could be snowflakes."

It also picks up birds, insects and, yes, wind turbines, he said.

"Not only the tip of the blade, but also the turbulence above that," he said. "A lot of people don't realize we can see a lot of things with Doppler radar."

Despite its far sight, radar has limitations, Albano said, which is why the National Weather Service regularly trains volunteer storm spotters to be the office's eyes and ears during storm season.

More than 80 people signed up for just such a class Saturday, March 14 at the McLean County Emergency Operations Center below the Law and Justice Center in downtown Bloomington, including first responders, seasoned spotters and first-timers alike.

"It's awesome having this many people here," said Cathy Beck, director of the county's emergency management agency. "Way bigger turnout than we were expecting."

Please see **STORMS**, Page A2

### STORM SPOTTING CLASSES

The National Weather Service in Lincoln offers the two-hour storm spotting classes in cities across Central Illinois. The following classes are scheduled for this spring:

6:30 p.m.	March 26	Galesburg
6:30 p.m.	March 30	Jacksonville
6:30 p.m.	March 31	Lincoln
6:30 p.m.	April 1	Monticello
6:30 p.m.	April 7	Champaign
6:30 p.m.	April 8	Decatur
10 a.m.	April 11,	virtual class
6:30 p.m.	April 14	Bartonville
6:30 p.m.	April 15	Altamont

For more information and to register, visit [weather.gov/ilx/spotter](http://weather.gov/ilx/spotter).

**"We'll see the rotation. We'll see the mesocyclone. We'll see it spinning like a top. But rotation doesn't equal tornado?"**

— Mike Albano,  
National Weather Service meteorologist



McLean County Emergency Management Agency operates out of the Emergency Operations Center in the basement of the McLean County Law and Justice Center.

### MIDEAST WARS

# Iran ups attacks after threats

Strikes land in southern Israel as key energy infrastructure targeted

ALON BERNSTEIN, SAM METZ  
AND SAMY MAGDY  
Associated Press

ARAD, Israel — Iran and the allied Lebanese militant group Hezbollah stepped up attacks on Israel on Sunday after the United States and Iran threatened to target critical infrastructure in the war in the Middle East, now in its fourth week.

Iran said the Strait of Hormuz, crucial to oil and other exports, would be "completely closed" immediately if the U.S. follows up on President Donald Trump's new threat to attack its power plants. Trump set a 48-hour deadline late Saturday to open the strait.

Iran's parliament speaker said Tehran also would retaliate against U.S. and Israeli energy and wider infrastructure in the region.

Israeli leaders visited Arad, one of two southern communities near a secretive nuclear research site struck by Iranian missiles late Saturday, wounding scores of people. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said it was a "miracle" no one was killed. He claimed Israel and the U.S. were well on their way to achieving their war goals and asked the international community for more support.

The developments signaled the war, which the U.S. and Israel launched Feb. 28, was moving in a dangerous new direction, despite Trump's comment last week he was considering "winding down" operations. It killed more than 2,000 people so far, rattled the global economy and sent oil prices surging.

Please see **IRAN**, Page A3

### US SUPREME COURT

# Case may shift how mail votes are counted

JULIE CARR SMYTH  
Associated Press

There will be just one Election Day for this fall's midterm elections — Nov. 3. But voters in 14 states who cast their votes by mail will be given a grace period ranging from a day later to several weeks in which their ballots can be received and counted.

Whether that extra time should be allowed is at the heart of a case that will be argued Monday before the U.S. Supreme Court. If the court strikes down those grace periods, it will leave those states — and their voters — scrambling to adjust with only a few months before absentee ballots are sent out for this fall's midterm elections.

The implications could extend well beyond the 14 states that give a grace period for regular ballots, depending on how the court ultimately rules. A total of 29 states allow for the late arrival of military and overseas ballots, according to the National Conference of State Legislatures and the Voting Rights Lab.

Please see **VOTING**, Page A3