



SES volunteers Bernie McNamara (Melville) and Rhonda Hemsley (Northshore).



Leaden skies fitting backdrop to Storm Awareness Week

Looming dark clouds and wet weather extended over the State, providing a suitable setting for this year's Storm Awareness Week.

While the front brought only heavy showers, State Emergency Service (SES) volunteers were out in force to spread the word about storm preparation and the role of the SES.

SES District Manager South East Metropolitan Region Chris Kin-Maung said the week, which ran from 5 to 12 May, provided an avenue for reminding people about the need to ready themselves and their properties for the storm season.

"A number of media opportunities were pursued leading up to, during and following the week, to get our messages across," Chris said.

"Highly visible in their orange overalls, volunteers spoke to different media outlets about their various roles in the SES and the types of hazards that storms produce.

"We were able to educate the community about how to reduce risks by highlighting the dangers of storms and actions people should take."

Media coverage included a television news story on Channel 7, radio interviews on Mix 94.5, 96FM, 6PR and ABC, along with an article in The West Australian newspaper and several in community newspapers.

Each year from May to October, severe storms including tornadoes, thunder, lightning, hail, flash flooding and gale force winds, cause major destruction to the southern half of WA.

In 2011, SES volunteers attended 99 separate storm incidents and volunteered more than 6,872 hours.

"Every storm season SES volunteers leave the warmth of their homes, their jobs and their loved ones without hesitation, to brave the wild weather outside to help others," Chris said.

"It's vital for the community to not only know what to do to help themselves during a storm, but also ways that the SES can assist them with emergency repairs."



SES volunteers Hazel Darkin (Northshore) and Steve Simpson (Regional Operations) with Fred, Lisa and Captain Paul from The Bunch on Mix 94.5.