

A Force of Nature

Many people are injured by tornadoes every year either because they did not have advance warning or because they do not know the difference between a Tornado Watch and a Tornado Warning.



Weather Bulletins

Weather bulletins are issued by the National Weather Service on radio and TV. These announcements give the location and course of severe weather or a tornado by county or parish.

Tornado Watch

Conditions are favorable for severe weather, including a tornado. A tornado watch usually lasts 2-6 hours and covers a section of the state. Keep an eye on the sky for changes in the weather. A watch allows time to prepare.

- Listen to local radio and television weather reports.
- Locate all members of your family and know where they will be.
- Review your tornado safety drill.
- Make sure your first aid kit is complete.
- If time permits, secure items that could be carried away or propelled such as garbage cans and lawn furniture. Park vehicles in the garage when possible.

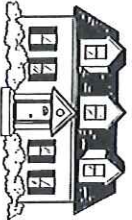
Tornado Warning

A tornado has been spotted. Time to act! **TAKE COVER IMMEDIATELY.** Stay away from glass, outside walls, and things that could fall on you. Be prepared for lightning and flash floods. A warning usually is issued for a portion of a county and lasts 30 minutes to an hour.

At Home

Seek shelter:

- in the basement, storm cellar, or lowest level of your house.
- away from windows, doors, and walls that face the outside.
- in the smallest room, closet, or hallway near the middle of your house.
- in a bathtub, cushion yourself with a mattress and cover yourself with a blanket or couch cushions.
- under a heavy table, bed, or stairs that are sturdy.
- by sitting under a plank of wood wedged on an angle in a doorway.



Take a flashlight in case the lights go out, a battery-operated radio for weather reports, extra batteries, and a first aid kit with daily medications and prescriptions. Keep pets on a leash or in a carrier.

In a Trailer, Car, or Outside

Get out of a trailer or car **IMMEDIATELY.** DO NOT seek shelter under or in them. Even a properly anchored mobile home is unsafe in winds higher than 50 mph.

Seek shelter:

- in a nearby safe shelter such as a neighbor's basement or cellar, school, or shopping center.
- by staying as low as possible, laying flat, face down, in the nearest ditch, ravine, or culvert, covering your head and neck.
- under a viaduct or highway overpass holding firmly onto the foundation or frame to ground yourself.



Tornadoes are unpredictable. NEVER try to outrun them in a car.

In Other Buildings

Seek shelter:

- ✓ in a small room or hallway in the middle of the building, on the lowest floor possible, like a basement.
- ✓ in a marked emergency shelter that is in the center of the building on a lower level.
- ✓ in the restroom.

Avoid seeking shelter near windows, glass doors, or in large open rooms like auditoriums and gymnasiums.



A civil defense sign (CD) marks safe shelters to be used in an emergency like a tornado.

Tornado Safety

Is your family prepared?



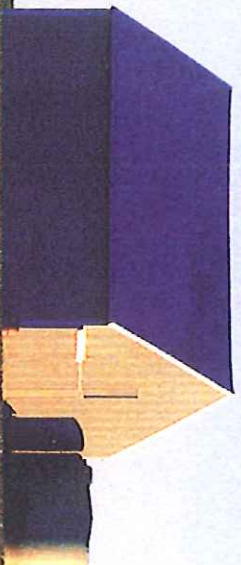
National Fire Safety Council, Inc.

Tornado Safety

Tornadoes occur when warm, moist air comes into contact with a cold front. Tornadoes tend to strike during the spring or summer months and most often between the hours of 3 and 9 p.m., but have been known to happen at any time.

Tornadoes can be spotted by people or by Doppler radar equipment which can predict where a tornado is located, its speed, and wind strength.

Those who are in the most danger are those who are in automobiles, mobile homes, the elderly, the young, people who are physically or mentally impaired, and people who do not understand the warning because of language barriers.



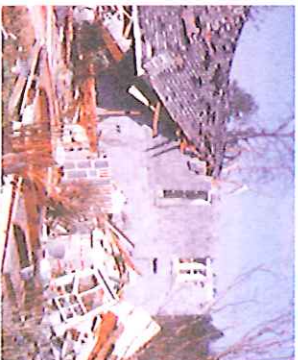
A tornado is a strong force of nature that can strike anytime, anywhere, and more than once. Within a matter of seconds it can injure, kill, and destroy.

Before a tornado

- Find out what warning signals (*sirens and weather bulletins*) and procedures your community has. Know where the established shelters are. Know evacuation procedures for the elderly, disabled, and animals.
- Establish family tornado safety drills. Practice them both during the day and at night. Check emergency procedures for daycare, hospitals, your workplace, etc.
- Choose 2 safe meeting places. One outside of your home for emergencies such as fire, and the other outside of your neighborhood in case you can't return home (*such as a marked shelter*). Be sure family members know where this safe shelter is and the phone number.
- Ask a relative or friend who lives out-of-state to be your "family contact." Inform other family members that do not live with you to call this person for information. Local telephone lines may not be in service and it may be easier to call long distance. This will keep lines needed for emergency use open.
- Inspect your home often for objects that could move, fall, break, or cause damage or injury.
- Keep inventories and records in a safe place away from your home or in a waterproof container.
- Be sure you have adequate insurance coverage.

After a tornado

DO NOT go to the tornado scene. Remain calm and stay in your safe shelter or safe meeting place until the danger has passed and help arrives. The area must be kept clear for emergency personnel. Listen for instructions and follow them. Cooperate with local officials who are trained in emergency procedures and are looking out for the welfare of the entire community.



- ✓ Apply first aid or seek help for seriously injured people.
- ✓ Check for property and automobile damage.
- ✓ Clean up flammable or poisonous liquid spills.
- ✓ Call your "family contact" and alert him to your condition. Ask him to notify other friends and relatives who may be concerned. Avoid using the phone unless needed for a life-threatening emergency.

During a tornado

Knowing the basic skills of survival in the event of a tornado can help keep your family safe whether you are at home or away.

Emergency personnel and disaster relief workers are on the scene quickly, but not everyone can be reached right away. Basic services such as electricity, water, gas, and the telephone may be out for days. You could suddenly lose everything including your home.



- ✓ When you check for gas or other utility line breaks **USE A FLASHLIGHT ONLY.** Never use a match, lighter, or any open flame to check these highly flammable items. Only turn off utilities if you suspect the lines are damaged or are instructed to do so. Remember: some utilities such as gas need to be turned back on by a professional.
- ✓ Be a good neighbor and help others in need, but do not venture into damaged buildings or areas.
- ✓ Avoid and report downed powerlines.
- ✓ Only use water that is declared safe for consumption and check food for glass and debris.
- ✓ Contact your insurance company.

