

Before the Storm Hits

A little planning can prevent unnecessary panic and confusion if a tornado does strike.

- Learn the warning signals used in your community. If a siren sounds, that means stay inside and take cover.
- Consider setting up a neighborhood information program through a club, church group or community group. Hold briefings on safety procedures as tornado season approaches. Set up a system to make sure senior citizens and shut-ins are alerted if there is a tornado warning.
- Put together an emergency storm kit including a transistor radio, flashlight, batteries and simple first aid items in a waterproof container.
- Make a complete inventory of your possessions for insurance purposes. Keep that list in a bank safe deposit box or other safe place away from your home.
- Conduct drills with your family in the home; make sure each member knows the correct procedures if they are at work or school when a tornado hits.

Tornado Watch

A Tornado Watch simply means that conditions are favorable for tornadoes to develop. In this case you should take precautions to protect you and your property, and listen to the radio to keep informed.

Tornadoes are most likely to occur in the late afternoon on a hot spring day. However, tornadoes have occurred in every month at all times of the day or night. When a tornado *watch* is issued, be alert for changes in the weather. And be prepared to act quickly. On average, 770 tornadoes are reported annually in the United States.

When a tornado **WATCH** is in effect you can take certain precautions to lessen danger.

Move cars inside a garage or carport, if possible, to avoid damage from hail that often accompanies severe storms. Keep your car keys and house keys with you.

Move lawn furniture and yard equipment such as lawnmowers inside *if time permits*. Otherwise they could become damaged or act as dangerous projectiles, causing serious injury or damage.

Account for family members at home. Have your emergency kit ready.

Keep your radio or TV tuned into the weather reports.

Tornado Warning

Tornado Warning means that a tornado has actually been sighted. Realize that tornadoes can be deadly and devastating storms, with winds up to 260 miles per hour. If one is issued for your area, seek shelter immediately! There is little time for closing windows or hunting for flashlights. It's a good idea to know where things are, and to have an emergency storm kit already prepared.

When a tornado **WARNING** has been issued on the radio or by siren, seek shelter immediately!

AT HOME: In the basement under something sturdy, like a bench. If there is no basement, a small room in the middle of the house (a closet or bathroom) is best. Always stay away from outside walls and windows.

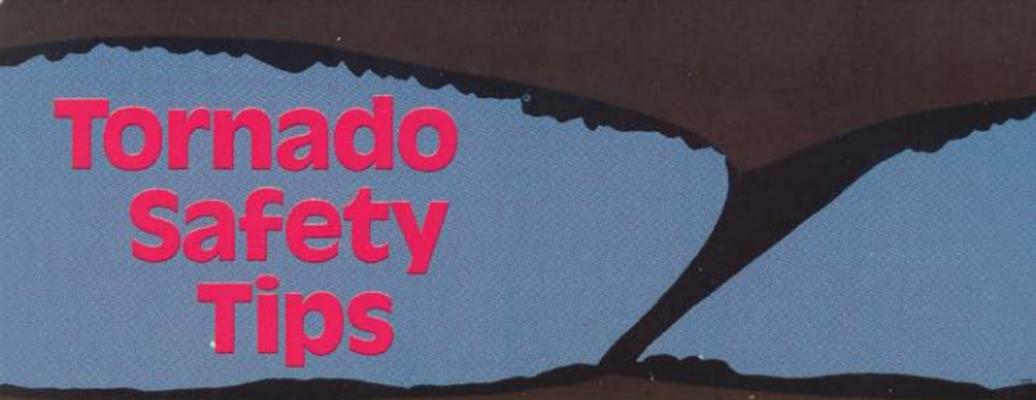
AT WORK OR SCHOOL: Designated shelter areas are best. Stay away from large open rooms like auditoriums and gymnasiums, and rooms with windows. Lie low with hands covering the back of your head to reduce neck injury.

IN SHOPPING MALLS: Go to a designated shelter area or to the center of the building on a low level. Stay away from large, open rooms and windows. Never seek shelter in cars in the parking lot.

IN MOBILE HOMES OR CARS: Leave the vehicle. Seek a safe structure or lie down in a low area with your hands covering the back of your head and neck. Keep alert for flash floods that often accompany such storms.

Remember: Emergency Dispatchers will be particularly busy during severe weather related periods. You should most certainly call 911 if you have an emergency however; calls requesting weather related information that could be obtained through the weather alerts, television, National Weather Service or otherwise could result in delays for actual emergencies.

Tornado Safety Tips



FACTS TO KNOW

TORNADO WATCH

Tornado conditions are a real possibility for an area.

STAY ALERT TO THESE DANGER SIGNS:

- Severe thunderstorms with strong, gusty winds.
- A “funnel” (dark column spinning from sky to ground).
- A loud, roaring noise (similar to a freight train).

TORNADO WARNING

A tornado has been sighted and may impact on you shortly.

PROTECT YOURSELF AND YOUR FAMILY SEEK SHELTER IMMEDIATELY!

AT HOME:

Go to storm shelter or basement. Go to rooms nearest center of house.

IN HIGH-RISES OR OTHER PUBLIC BUILDINGS

(Schools, Hospitals, Nursing Homes, etc.):

Move to interior (preferably a stairwell or hallway.)

IN YOUR CAR:

STOP!! Get out and lie flat in a low area. Cover your head.

IN OPEN COUNTRY:

Lie face down in a low area (ditch or ravine, if nearby). Cover your head.

DO NOT:

- Stay in mobile home. Seek shelter elsewhere.
- Try to outrun the tornado on foot or in your car.
- Open the windows.

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS, CALL YOUR LOCAL
CIVIL DEFENSE OR EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT OFFICE.