

Tornado Season Nears

Know what to do when a tornado is spotted

In a house with a basement: Avoid windows. Get in the basement and under some kind of sturdy protection (heavy table or work bench), or cover yourself with a mattress or sleeping bag. Beware of heavy objects possibly falling.

In a house with no basement, a dorm, or an apartment: Avoid windows. Go to the lowest floor, small center room (like a bathroom or closet), under a stairwell, or in an interior hallway with no windows.

In an office building, hospital, nursing home or skyscraper: Go directly to an enclosed, windowless area in the center of the building--away from glass and on the lowest floor possible.

At school: Follow the drill! Go to the interior hall or room in an orderly way as you are told. Crouch low, head down, and protect the back of your head with your arms. Stay away from windows and large open rooms like gyms and auditoriums.

In a car or truck: Vehicles are extremely dangerous in a tornado. If the tornado is visible, far away, and the traffic is light, you may be able to drive out of its path by moving at right angles to the tornado. Otherwise, park the car as quickly and safely as possible--out of the traffic lanes. Get out and seek shelter in a sturdy building.

In the open outdoors: If possible, seek shelter in a sturdy building. If not, lie flat and face-down on low ground, protecting the back of your head with

your arms.

In a mobile home: Get out! Even if your home is tied down, you are probably safer outside, even if the only alternative is to seek shelter out in the open. Most tornadoes can destroy even tied-down mobile homes; and it is best not to play the low odds that yours will make it. If your community has a tornado shelter, go there fast. If there is a sturdy permanent building within easy running distance, seek shelter there. Otherwise, lie flat on low ground away from your home, protecting your head.

Interesting Tornado Facts

1. Funnel clouds have been observed on every continent except Antarctica.
2. The United States has significantly more tornadoes than the rest of the world because of low-lying geography and a climate that breeds strong thunderstorms.
3. Knives and forks have been found embedded in tree trunks flung from a tornado.
4. Usually, a tornado's color matches the color of the ground.
5. Some tornadoes make a considerable amount of noise while others make very little. It depends on the objects a tornado might hit or carry. A tornado moving along an open plain may make very little noise.

Watch VS. Warning

What is the difference between a Tornado Watch and a Tornado Warning?

A tornado watch is just to let folks know to be on the lookout for a possible tornado in the area. A tornado has not been seen but the conditions are very favorable for tornadoes to occur at any moment. A Tornado Warning is a notification that a tornado has been seen or picked up by radar. Sirens sound in towns for three minutes continuously. (No "all clear" siren.)

Good information to know

During a Tornado Watch:

- * Move cars inside a garage or carport. Keep your car keys and house keys with you.
- * Move lawn furniture and yard equipment such as lawnmowers inside if time permits.
- * Account for family members at home.
- * Have your emergency kit ready.
- * Keep your radio or TV tuned into the weather reports. Listen to NOAA Weather Stations for reports.

Tornado Preparedness:

- * Learn the warning signals. In Goodland and Kanorado sirens are sounded for three minutes for a tornado warning. (There is no "all clear" siren.)
- * 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.
- * Conduct drills with your family in the home.

Weak Tornadoes

- * 69% of all tornadoes
- * Less than 5% of tornado deaths
- * Lifetime 1-10+ minutes
- * Winds less than 110 mph

Strong Tornadoes

- * 29% of all tornadoes
- * Nearly 30% of all tornado deaths
- * May last 20 minutes or longer
- * Winds 110-205 mph

Violent Tornadoes

- * Only 2% of all tornadoes
- * 70% of all tornado deaths
- * Lifetime can exceed 1 hour
- * Lifetime can exceed 1 hour

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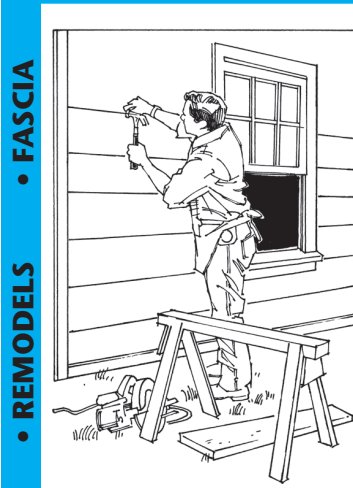
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