

# How to Survive a Tornado!

## Tornadoes Can Kill

Although most tornadoes strike during the spring and summer months, it is important to realize that they can occur anywhere at any time. The winds of the tornado can reach speeds of 300 mph, and at these speeds, neither man nor nature make many things that can hold together. The one thing to remember about tornadoes is that they will go where they want. **GET TO SHELTER IMMEDIATELY!** With this in mind, the best place to go is underground, or as underground as possible to avoid the winds and flying debris that can kill.

## NOAA Weather Radio

Broadcasts National Weather Service warnings, watches, forecasts and other hazard information 24 hours a day. The hearing and visually impaired also can get these warnings by community weather radio with alarm tones to other kinds of attention getting devices like strobe lights, pagers, bed shakers and text printers.

## Be Prepared!

- No matter where your shelter is, you should have a few basic supplies there. Since most tornadoes occur at night, you should have spare clothing, underwear and shoes. Sleeping bags and blankets are also good. A portable radio and/or weather radio and a flashlight are a must. Fresh drinking water and food are helpful, as well as a few tools to help you dig out in case of collapse.
- Once you determine where your shelter is going to be, practice getting there. Practices should be held by the entire family at least once before the tornado season begins and then again during the summer. The more you practice, the faster and more safely you will get to shelter. Since most tornadoes occur at night and usually take out power lines, more than likely your home will be dark. You are less likely to get hurt if you are going someplace you have been before.

## Get to Safety

### THE HOUSE

- The safest place in the home is the basement and the safest place in the basement is in a corner. If no corner is available, an outside wall is the next best location.
- One basic rule that should be followed is to **AVOID WINDOWS**. Flying debris can kill and the worst kind of flying debris is broken glass.
- For added protection, get under something strong, such as a workbench or heavy table. If possible, cover your body with a blanket or sleeping bag. Protect your head with anything that is available.
- Another safe place in the basement is underneath the basement stairway. Stairways are structurally sound and are usually a safe place to be, especially if they are along an inside wall. No matter where you seek shelter, you should avoid being underneath heavy objects such as refrigerators, washing machines, or pianos.

structure is usually supported solely by the outside walls. When the tornado approaches, the strong winds knock out the supports and the roof collapses. Some examples of these types of buildings are: civic centers, arenas, memorial buildings, theaters, shopping centers, grocery stores, swimming pools and gymnasiums.

### MOTOR VEHICLES

- The least desirable place to be during a tornado is in a motor vehicle. Cars, buses and trucks easily become flying missiles in a tornado.
- Never try to outrun a tornado in your car.
- Stop your vehicle and get out. Seek shelter. Try to get into someone else's basement. Do not get under or next to your vehicle; it may roll over on you.

### MOBILE HOMES

- During a tornado, one of the least desirable places to be is in a mobile home. The winds knock the home from its foundation, rolling it along the ground and breaking it apart. If you are in a mobile home when a tornado approaches, seek other shelter immediately.
- Seek shelter on foot if possible. **DO NOT DRIVE YOUR CAR!** Do not get under a mobile home!
- Plan ahead if you live in a mobile home. Make arrangements with friends or neighbors that have basements. When the weather looks threatening, go there. Encourage your mobile home group to develop its own shelter.

### OUTDOORS

- If you are trapped outside, get as low as possible. Remember, your best chance for survival is to get away from the killing winds. Do not stand up and watch the tornado.
- Seek shelter in a ditch, gully, or culvert. Even just a low spot in the ground is going to give you some protection.
- Do not get into a grove of trees. Remember to protect your head.

### LONG SPAN BUILDINGS

- Long span buildings are especially dangerous because the entire roof

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**TAKE COVER:** an oscillating (up and down) tone means that a tornado or tornado activity has been spotted and is headed towards you.  
**ALL CLEAR:** a single long tone means it's safe to come out. This is used for testing the system on Mondays.  
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