

Tornados

In the event that a tornado would occur in this area, residents should take precautionary measures to prepare for such an event (adapted from material distributed from State Farm Insurance and the National Coordinating Council on Emergency Management).

Tornado Watch

A TORNADO WATCH simply means that conditions are favorable for tornadoes to develop.

Tornadoes are most likely to happen in the late afternoon on hot spring days. However, tornadoes have occurred in every month at all times of the day or night. On average, 770 tornadoes are reported annually in the United States.

WHEN A TORNADO WATCH IS IN EFFECT:

- Move cars inside a garage or carport, if possible, to avoid damage from hail that often accompanies severe storms.
- Move lawn furniture and yard equipment inside if time permits. Otherwise, they could become damaged or act as dangerous projectiles, causing serious injury or damage.
- If you're at home, keep your radio or TV tuned to weather reports and account for family members.
- Above all, be alert for changing weather- that's what a WATCH is all about. Tornadoes often - but not always - occur in conjunction with a severe thunderstorm producing hail. If you have any indication that a tornado may be approaching, take cover immediately. DO NOT WAIT FOR A WARNING TO BE ISSUED.

Tornado Warning

A 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 A TORNADO WARNING IS ISSUED FOR YOUR AREA, SEEK SHELTER IMMEDIATELY!!

Don't wait until an emergency siren sounds to start grabbing supplies and thinking about what you should do.

Emergency Plans

If you are. . .

At Home: The safest place to be in a tornado is underground, preferably under something sturdy like a work bench. If there's no basement or cellar in your home, a small room in the middle of the house - or a closet - is the best. The more walls between you and the outside, the better.

In a Mobile or Manufactured Home: Residents in mobile homes, even those with tiedowns, should seek shelter elsewhere at the first sign of severe weather. While mobile homes can be attractive alternatives to traditional homes, they also may be more vulnerable to damage from high winds. Go to a prearranged shelter or talk to a friend or relative ahead of time to see if you can go to their house when the weather turns bad. If you live in a mobile home park, talk to management about the availability of a nearby shelter. If no emergency plan exists, consider setting up a neighborhood information program. Hold briefings on safety procedures as tornado season approaches. As a last resort, go outside and lie flat on the ground with your hands over your head and neck. Be alert for flash floods that often accompany such storms.

In your Car: Tornadoes can toss cars - even large trucks - around like toys. Never try to outrun a tornado. If you see a funnel cloud or hear a tornado WARNING issued on the radio or by outdoor siren, get out of your vehicle and 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.

At Work or School: Be aware of emergency shelter plans in office buildings and schools you and your family frequent. If a specific shelter area does not exist, move into interior hallways or small rooms on the building's lowest level. Avoid areas with glass and wide, free span roofs.

In a Store or Shopping Mall: If you can't get into a basement or designated shelter, move to the center of the lowest level of the building, away from windows, and lie flat.