

# Tornado Safety Tips



## Before the Tornado

- Update your phone number and e-mail address with your electric company so you can be served faster in the event of an outage.
- Develop an emergency plan that addresses any special medical needs you or your family members have. Call your local emergency management office to discuss necessary arrangements.
- Have your Emergency Preparedness Kit stocked and readily available.
- Designate a secure shelter area such as a safe room, basement, storm cellar, or the lowest building level in the event of a tornado.
- Make plans to shelter with friends or family in case you are unable to stay at home after a tornado. If necessary, go to a public shelter.
- Pay attention to local weather reports on the radio, television, or internet. Go to NOAA Weather Radio and your local news or official social media accounts for updated emergency information. Follow the instructions of state, local, and tribal officials.
- Tornado Watch: Tornadoes are possible in and near the watch area. Review and discuss your emergency plans and check supplies and your safe room. Be ready to act quickly if a warning is issued or you suspect a tornado is approaching.

- Tornado Warning: A tornado has been sighted or indicated by weather radar. Move to an interior room on the lowest floor of a sturdy building.
- Know the signs of a tornado, including a rotating funnel-shaped cloud, an approaching cloud of debris, or a loud roar—similar to a freight train.
- If you see approaching storms or any of the danger signs, be prepared to take shelter immediately.

## During the Tornado

- Listen to EAS, NOAA Weather Radio, or local alerting systems for current emergency information and instructions.
- If you are under a tornado warning, seek shelter immediately. Most injuries associated with high winds are from flying debris, so remember to protect your head.
- If you are inside:
  - Go to a pre-designated shelter area such as a safe room, basement, storm cellar, or the lowest building level. If there is no basement, go to the center of an interior room on the lowest level (closet, interior hallway) away from corners, windows, doors, and outside walls. Put as many walls as possible between you and the outside. Get under a sturdy table and use your arms to protect your head and neck.

- In a high-rise building, go to a small interior room or hallway on the lowest floor possible.
  - Do not open windows.
  - Listen to EAS, NOAA Weather Radio, or local alerting systems for current emergency information and instructions.
- If you are in a car or outdoors and cannot get to a building, cover your head and neck with your arms and cover your body with a coat of blanket, if possible. Do not try to outrun a tornado in a vehicle.

## After the Tornado

- Keep listening to EAS, NOAA Weather Radio, and local authorities for updated information.
- Do not enter damaged buildings until you are told that they are safe.
- Wear sturdy shoes or boots, long sleeves, and gloves when handling or walking on or near debris.
- Stay away from downed power lines and debris. Treat all fallen wires and anything touching them as though they are energized. Immediately report downed lines to your electric company.
- After a tornado, be aware of possible structural, electrical, or gas-leak hazards in your home. In general, if you suspect any damage to your home, shut off electrical power, natural gas, and propane tanks to avoid fire, electrocution, or explosions.

## If Your Power Is Out

- Report your outage immediately to your local electric company. Don't rely on your neighbors to report your outage.
- In hot weather, close drapes and blinds on the sunny side of your house, drink plenty of fluids, take your pets to a cool basement location, and go to an air-conditioned civic center, mall, or library if necessary to stay cool.
- Remain patient. Every electric company has a detailed plan for restoring electrical service after a power outage. Typically, one of the first steps a company takes—to prevent injuries and fires—is to make sure that power is no longer flowing through downed lines. Restoration then proceeds based on established priorities, which you can learn about on EEI's website, [www.eei.org](http://www.eei.org).

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Source: [www.Ready.gov](http://www.Ready.gov), a website operated by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and the U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)