

TORNADO SAFETY

Recent tornadoes in the South and Southeast have caused massive devastation and loss of life. Due diligence prompts us to prepare ourselves and our businesses as much as possible to limit losses of any kind in future events. Although more common in the geographic region termed "Dixie Alley" (stretching from Alabama to Virginia) and in the classic Tornado Alley (stretching from Texas to Illinois), tornadoes can happen anywhere you reside, travel or work. In fact, tornadoes have occurred in all 50 states.

TORNADO DANGER SIGNS

- An approaching cloud of debris can mark the location of a tornado even if a funnel is not visible.
- Before a tornado hits, the wind may die down and the air may become very still.
- Tornadoes generally occur near the trailing edge of a thunderstorm. It is not uncommon to see clear, sunlit skies behind a tornado.

WHAT TO DO DURING A TORNADO

IF AT HOME

- If you have a tornado safe room or engineered shelter, go there immediately, if not. . .
- Go at once to a windowless, interior room; storm cellar; basement; or lowest level of the building. If there is no basement. . .
- Go to an inner hallway or a smaller inner room without windows, such as a bathroom or closet. If none of the above. . .
- Get away from the windows.
- Get under a piece of sturdy furniture, such as a workbench or heavy table or desk and hold on to it.
- Use arms to protect head and neck.
- If in a mobile home, get out and find shelter elsewhere.



TORNADO FACTS

A tornado is a violent windstorm characterized by a twisting, funnel-shaped cloud. It is spawned by a thunderstorm (or sometimes a hurricane) and formed when cool air overrides a layer of warm air, forcing the rapid rise of the warm air. The damage from a tornado is a result of the high wind velocity and wind-blown debris. Tornado season is generally March through August, although tornadoes can occur at any time of year. They tend to occur in the afternoons and evenings: over 80% of all tornadoes strike between noon and midnight.



IF AT SCHOOL OR WORK

- Go to the area designated in your tornado plan.
- Avoid places with wide-span roofs, such as auditoriums, cafeterias, large hallways or shopping malls.
- Get under a piece of sturdy furniture, such as a workbench or heavy table or desk and hold on to it.
- Use arms to protect head and neck

IF OUTDOORS

- If possible, get inside a building.
- If shelter is not available or there is no time to get indoors, lie in a ditch or low-lying area or crouch near a strong building. Be aware of the potential for flooding.
- Use arms to protect head and neck.

IF IN THE CAR

- Never try to out-drive a tornado in a car or truck.
- Get out of the car immediately and take shelter in a nearby building.
- If there is no time to get indoors, get out of the car and lie in a ditch or low-lying area away from the vehicle. Be aware of the potential for flooding.

AVOIDING INJURY AFTER A TORNADO

- Continue to monitor your battery-powered radio or television for emergency information.
- Be careful when entering any structure that has been damaged.
- Wear sturdy shoes or boots, long sleeves and gloves when handling or walking on or near debris.
- Be aware of hazards from exposed nails and broken glass.
- Do not touch downed power lines or objects in contact with downed lines. Report electrical hazards to the police and the utility company.
- Use battery-powered lanterns, if possible, rather than candles to light homes without electrical power. If you use candles, make sure they are in safe holders away from curtains, paper, wood or other flammable items. Never leave a candle burning when you are out of the room.
- Hang up displaced telephone receivers that may have been knocked off by the tornado, but stay off the telephone, except to report an emergency.

- Cooperate fully with public safety officials.
- Respond to requests for volunteer assistance by police, fire fighters, emergency management and relief organizations, but do not go into damaged areas unless assistance has been requested. Your presence could hamper relief efforts, and you could endanger yourself.

If a tornado “watch” is issued for your area, it means that a tornado is “possible.” If a tornado “warning” is issued, it means that a tornado has actually been spotted, or is strongly indicated on radar, and it is time to go to a safe shelter immediately.

CONTACT

For additional information visit www.fema.gov. You can also contact your local Willis Property Risk Control Consultant or:

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