Tornado Safety at Home, Work, or at Play

Have a Plan at Home, at Work, and When You’re Away

- In a home or building, move to a pre-designated shelter, such as a basement, and get under a sturdy table or the stairs.

- If a basement is not available, move to a small interior room or hallway on the lowest floor and get under a sturdy table. Put as many walls as possible between you and the storm.

- Stay away from windows.

- Do not try to outrun a tornado in your vehicle. Instead, leave it immediately for a safe shelter. If caught outside or in a vehicle, and shelter is not available, lie flat in a nearby ditch or depression and cover your head with your hands.

- Mobile homes, even if tied down, offer little protection from tornadoes. You should leave a mobile home and go to the designated storm shelter or the lowest floor of a sturdy nearby building.

- When vacationing, always bring along a NOAA Weather Radio All Hazards and have a place of safety in mind in the event severe weather threatens.

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Tornado Myths and Truths

**MYTH:** Areas near lakes, rivers, and hills are safe from tornadoes.

**TRUTH:** No place is safe from tornadoes. The tornado that struck Door County in August 1998 formed on the waters of Green Bay and moved onshore, causing over $5 million in damage.

**MYTH:** The low pressure with a tornado causes buildings to “explode” as the tornado passes overhead.

**TRUTH:** Violent winds and debris slamming into buildings cause most structural damage.

**MYTH:** Windows should be opened before a tornado approaches to equalize pressure and minimize damage.

**TRUTH:** Leave windows alone. The most important action is to immediately go to a safe shelter.

**MYTH:** If you are driving and a tornado is sighted, you should turn and drive at right angles of the storm.

**TRUTH:** The best thing to do is to seek the best available shelter. Many people are injured or killed when remaining in their vehicles.

**MYTH:** People caught in the open should seek shelter under highway overpasses.

**TRUTH:** Take shelter in a sturdy, reinforced building if at all possible. The winds of a tornado may actually increase in the tight space of an overpass, increasing the chance for injury.
Lightning Safety for Coaches and Officials

Lightning Kills...Play it Safe!

• All thunderstorms produce lightning and are dangerous. In an average year, lightning kills more people in the U.S. than either tornadoes or hurricanes.

• Lightning often strikes outside the area of heavy rain and may strike as far as 10 miles from any rainfall.

• If you hear thunder, you are in danger! Anytime thunder is heard, the thunderstorm is close enough to pose an immediate lightning threat to your location.

• Have a lightning safety plan. Designate a safe location before the event starts. Have specific guidelines for suspending the activity so that everyone has time to reach safety.

• Prior to a practice or event, check the latest forecast. If thunderstorms are expected, consider postponing activities early to avoid being caught in a dangerous situation.

• If you hear thunder, suspend your activity immediately and instruct everyone to get to a safe place. Substantial buildings provide the best protection. Avoid sheds, small or open shelters, dugouts, bleachers, and grandstands. If a sturdy building is not nearby, a hard-topped metal vehicle with windows closed will offer good protection.

• If boating or swimming, get to land and find shelter.

• Do not resume activities until 30 minutes have passed since the last thunder was heard.

Lightning Myths and Truths

MYTH: If it is not raining, there is no danger from lightning.
TRUTH: Lightning can strike outside of rain. If you hear thunder, the storm is close enough to pose a lightning threat.

MYTH: The rubber soles of shoes or rubber tires on a vehicle will protect you from lightning.
TRUTH: Rubber soled shoes and rubber tires provide no protection from lightning. The steel frame of a hard-topped vehicle provides increased protection if you are not touching metal. Although you may be injured if lightning strikes your car, you are much safer inside a vehicle than outside.

MYTH: People struck by lightning carry an electric charge and should not be touched.
TRUTH: Lightning-strike victims carry no charge and should be attended to immediately. Contact your local American Red Cross chapter for information on CPR and first aid classes.

MYTH: “Heat lightning” occurs after very hot summer days and poses no threat.
TRUTH: Heat lightning is a term used to describe lightning from a thunderstorm too far away for thunder to be heard.
Stay Informed with NOAA Weather Radio All Hazards

The “Smoke Alarm” for Severe Weather

- NOAA Weather Radio (NWR) All Hazards is a public warning system that broadcasts forecasts, warnings, and emergency information 24 hours a day directly to the public.

- Radio receivers can quietly monitor these broadcasts and will alert when important (life threatening) messages are issued for your area.

- “All Hazards” messages include:
  ▶ Natural (e.g., tornado, floods, high winds, blizzards)
  ▶ Accidents (e.g., chemical release, train derailments, nuclear power emergencies)
  ▶ Terrorist attacks

America is safer when our schools are safer

a new program to protect our children

Weather radios were distributed to public schools in your community to help safeguard your children. This program (including the actual distribution) started in the fall of 2006 and is sponsored by the Department of Education, Department of Commerce, and Department of Homeland Security. More information on the program can be found at:

http://public-alert-radio.nws.noaa.gov

- Please ensure they are used. During an emergency, seconds count! These radios are a valuable alerting device, easy to use, and can also be used to check on every day weather, including wind chill information during the winter.

- Place your radio in areas that are constantly monitored (e.g., school office, principal’s office). Remember those occasions when the school is used for activities outside normal hours and make sure the radio can be monitored during those times.

- If you have any questions about weather radios, contact your local National Weather Service office.

Related Web Sites

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Website</th>
<th>URL</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NOAA Weather Radio Home Page</td>
<td><a href="http://www.weather.gov/nwr">www.weather.gov/nwr</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>NWS All Hazards Web Page</td>
<td><a href="http://www.weather.gov/nwr/allhazard.htm">www.weather.gov/nwr/allhazard.htm</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>NWR Coverage in Wisconsin</td>
<td><a href="http://www.weather.gov/mkx/nwr-table.php">www.weather.gov/mkx/nwr-table.php</a></td>
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Family Disaster Plan

Be Prepared

Families should be prepared for all hazards that could affect their area. The National Weather Service and Wisconsin Emergency Management urge every family to develop a family disaster plan.

Where will your family be when disaster strikes? They could be anywhere—at work, at school, or in the car. How will you find each other? Will you know if your children are safe? Disaster may force you to evacuate your neighborhood or confine you to your home. What would you do if basic services—water, gas, electricity, or telephone—were cut off?

Put together a family disaster plan that answers those questions—and practice it.

A Disaster Supplies Kit should include...

- A three-day supply of water and food that won’t spoil.
- One change of clothing per person.
- One blanket or sleeping bag per person.
- A first aid kit, including prescription medicines.
- A battery-powered NOAA Weather Radio.
- Emergency tools, including a portable radio, flashlight, and plenty of extra batteries.
- An extra set of car keys and a credit card or cash.
- Special items for infant, elderly, or disabled family members.

Did You Know...

Wisconsin Tornado Weather Facts

- Wisconsin averages 21 tornadoes a year.
- In 2007, 18 tornadoes hit the state, including a 40 mile long twister, the longest tornado track in the U.S. last year.
- The peak tornado season in Wisconsin is April to August, but tornadoes can occur any time of year.
- Tornadoes can occur any time during the day or night, but are most frequent between 4 pm and 9 pm.
- About 80% of tornadoes that hit Wisconsin are relatively weak, with winds under 110 mph. Only 1% are violent with winds over 200 mph.

Other Weather Awareness Dates

Wisconsin’s NOAA Weather Radio Awareness Day
May 14, 2008

Wisconsin’s Heat Awareness Day
June 12, 2008

National Lightning Safety Awareness Week
June 22–June 28, 2008

Wisconsin’s Winter Weather Awareness Week
November 10–14, 2008
Severe Weather Watches and Warnings

What to Listen For...

When conditions are favorable for severe weather to develop, a WATCH is issued. As storms develop, National Weather Service personnel use information from weather radar, storm spotters, and other sources to issue Severe Thunderstorm and Tornado WARNINGS for areas where severe weather is imminent.

Watches and warnings are relayed to local radio and television stations and are broadcast on NOAA Weather Radio All Hazards.

Local public safety officials also get the warnings, and can activate local warning systems to alert communities.

Tornado Watch: Severe thunderstorms with tornadoes are possible in your area. Remain alert for approaching storms. Be prepared to move to safety if a Warning is issued. Know what counties are in the watch area by listening to NOAA Weather Radio All Hazards or local radio or television stations.

Severe Thunderstorm Watch: Thunderstorms with large hail and damaging winds are possible. Be prepared to move to safety if a Warning is issued.

Tornado Warning: A tornado has been sighted or indicated by weather radar. Move to a place of safety now!

Severe Thunderstorm Warning: A thunderstorm with large hail and damaging winds has been reported or indicated by weather radar.

Warnings indicate imminent danger to life and property to those in the path of the storm!

For More Information...

Check out these web sites for more safety tips, the latest weather forecast, and other weather awareness information.

Tornado Preparedness Plan for Schools
http://www.weather.gov/arx/?n=schoolprep

Lightning Safety
http://www.lightningsafety.noaa.gov

Flood Safety
http://www.floodsafety.noaa.gov

NOAA National Weather Service
http://www.weather.gov
Click on your part of the state for local weather information

StormReady – Community Preparedness
http://www.stormready.noaa.gov

Wisconsin Emergency Management
http://emergencymanagement.wi.gov

American Red Cross
http://www.redcross.org

FEMA For Kids
http://www.fema.gov/kids

Ready: Prepare, Plan, Stay Informed
http://www.ready.gov