

## Myth vs Truth



**Myth:** Areas around a lake, river, and hills are safe from tornadoes.

**Truth:** No place is safe from tornadoes. A tornado can form on the water and move to onshore.

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

**Truth:** Take shelter in a sturdy, reinforced building if possible. The winds of a tornado may increase in the tight space of an overpass, increasing the chance for injury.

## Facts



On average, more than 1,100 tornadoes are reported in the U.S. each year.

While, the majority of twisters result in minor damage, when a major tornado strikes the results can be devastating.

### Some Additional Facts:

- The most violent tornadoes can last more than an hour.
- The Fujita Tornado scale estimates tornado strength based on damage surveys. An F5 tornado can reach speeds of up to 318 mph.
- Tornadoes can drive blades of grass into trees and toss 20-ton railroad cars with ease.
- The path of damage resulting from one tornado can exceed 50 miles.

### CONTACT INFO:

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## Tornado Survival Guide



### Twisting and Terrifying

A tornado is defined as a powerful rotating column of air descending from a thunderstorm. The peak months for tornado activity are April, May, June, due in part to the presence of warm air in many regions of the country, which fuels tornado-producing severe thunderstorms.

The US experiences more tornadoes than anywhere else in the world.

# Preparedness

- 1** Warning systems: in regions that experience frequent tornadoes, business should develop a warning system that is different from the alarms used for other emergencies, such as fires.
  - The alarm system should be tested on a regular basis.
  - Employees should be able to identify the tornado warning alarm and know what actions to take if they hear the alarm.
- 2** Shelter: Surviving a tornado often depends on finding shelter that will protect against windblown objects and collapsing walls. A basement or a storm cellar provides the best protection against a tornado.  
**If underground shelter is not available, the best alternative includes**
  - A small interior room, such as a restroom, on the lowest floor if possible.
  - A room without windows that is constructed with reinforced concrete, brick, or block.

It is important to avoid areas with wide span, flat roofs, such as cafeterias or auditoriums.
- 3** Emergency Supplies: Keep well-stocked emergency supply kits in shelter areas. Include a NOAA weather radio with a warning alarm and battery back-up in each kit. Other important items to include:
  - First-aid kits
  - Drinking water
  - Non-perishable food items
  - Flashlight

# Response

## A tornado is coming: Now what?

- 1** Danger signs: Although tornadoes often strike with little warning, there are danger signs that indicate a tornado is likely to occur.  
Look out for:
  - A dark, often greenish-colored sky
  - A strange quiet that occurs in the middle of a thunderstorm.
  - Large hail
  - A loud roar, like, the sound of a freight train.
  - A dark low-lying cloud that is rotating, pulling up debris from the ground, such as branches.**The presence of any of these conditions means individuals should take shelter immediately.**
- 2** On the Road: The worst place to be during a tornado is in a vehicle. You cannot outrun a tornado - do not attempt to do so. If you are on the road and see a tornado or learn that a tornado warning is in effect.
  - Stop driving and exit the vehicle.
  - Do not seek shelter under the vehicle.
  - Follow the directions for seeking shelter outdoors during a tornado.
- 3** Outdoors: If you are caught outdoors during a tornado keep in mind the following:
  - Avoid areas with a lot of trees.
  - Find a gully, ditch, or low spot on the ground and lie down flat.
  - Protect your head with your arms.
- 4** In the building, but Not in a preferred shelter: Individuals who cannot make it to designated shelter areas when a tornado warning is issued should remember to:
  - Stay away from windows to avoid being struck by flying glass.
  - Get under a piece of sturdy furniture, such as a work bench or heavy table, and hold on tight.

# Recovery

## After a Tornado

Some research has shown that up to 50 percent of injuries suffered, because of tornadoes, occur during rescue efforts, clean-up, and other post -tornado activities.

### To prevent injuries and possible death after such a storm, follow these tips:

- Check for injuries. Do not attempt to move seriously injured individuals unless they are in immediate danger. If you are trapped, try to draw attention to your location.
- Continue to monitor the situation via radio or television.
- Watch out for broken glass and other sharp objects that may have entered the shelter area as you begin your evacuation.
- Avoid downed power lines and objects that are in contact with downed power lines.
- Evacuate damaged buildings quickly and use extreme caution when doing so. Be on the lookout for falling debris and other hazards, such as leaking gas lines or flammable liquids that have spilled.

### If you are entering damaged building to check conditions or search for survivors, remember to:

- Wear sturdy shoes to protect your feet from sharp objects.
- Use flashlights or battery-powered lanterns.
- Check for structural damage, including damaged walls, staircases, and windows.
- Look for fire hazards and electrical system damage.
- Check for gas leaks.