



Guide to Tornado Safety

[YourLocalSecurity.com](https://www.YourLocalSecurity.com)

Tornado Safety Tips

In the United States, tornadoes most frequently occur in the plains region between the Rocky and Appalachian Mountains. In fact, this part of the U.S. is sometimes referred to as Tornado Alley, spanning across, South Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas, Texas, Oklahoma, and parts of Colorado, Iowa, and Minnesota.

Tell-tale signs of tornadoes are a dark or green-colored sky and dark, low-lying clouds, hand in hand with lightning and large hail. If tornado conditions exist, local news sources will issue a Tornado Watch. If a tornado is actually sighted, then news sources will issue a Tornado Warning. So, if the weather looks like it might be threatening, tune into your local news station, either on television or radio, for updates. If a tornado approaches, it will announce itself with a loud roar, like a freight train.

If you find yourself in tornado conditions, get inside and have a designated place to stay until the storm clears. Generally, you want to make your way to a home's basement, or lowest floor, away from windows. If a tornado is heading toward your home, you should hunker down under some blankets or a mattress to protect yourself from falling objects. It may seem like common sense, but despite adventurous depictions in films like *Twister*, you don't want to attempt to outrun a tornado. After the storm passes, you can evaluate your home's damage and seek an evacuation center if you need help or supplies.

How to Prepare Your Home

Tornadoes can be devastating, but there are steps you can take beforehand to minimize damage and help keep you and your family safe. Here are some preparedness tips:

Battery-powered Radio

Keep fresh batteries in a battery-powered radio or small television, so you can get the latest news reports and weather warnings, even if your power goes out. Keep in mind: a Tornado Watch means conditions exist for tornadoes to occur and a Tornado Warning means that a tornado has been sighted.

Large Furniture

Secure large furniture. Consider bolting couches or large tables to the floor and fastening bookcases or large paintings to the wall. Securing large furniture ahead of time will lessen the chances of large objects hurting family members or damaging property in the event of a tornado.

Windows

Try to keep furniture away from windows, and invest in double-pane windows. If a tornado is imminent, consider nailing boards over your windows to reinforce their strength and to keep objects and winds from flying through your home.

Circuit Breaker

Most homes have a main electrical panel, where you can simply shut off the power to your entire home by turning the switch to “off.” There should also be a fuse box or circuit breaker where you can shut off all the circuits. Turning off the power to your home before a tornado hits may prevent damage to your home.

Gas Meter

If it’s safe to go outside, you’ll want to locate your gas meter to turn off your gas. A gas meter is usually located on the side of a home, in the garage, or in a small cabinet. Using a wrench, you’ll want to turn the gas shutoff valve. This way, if any pipes are broken in the disaster, you won’t risk a gas leakage and possible fire.

Water Valve

If you have time before the storm approaches, you should turn off your water. With most homes, this means locating a main stopcock that’s a brass valve with a round handle, usually located in the kitchen, downstairs bathroom, or utility room. You should locate this valve before an emergency, so you’ll be ready.

Protective Coverings

You should store mattresses, pillows, and blankets in your basement or other shelter area. In case of a tornado, you’ll want to use these coverings to protect yourself from flying debris or falling objects.

Automobiles

Stay away from cars, mobile homes, or other automobiles during a tornado. Cars do not make good shelters from tornadoes, and you should never try to outrun a tornado with your car.

If you live in an area with frequent tornadoes, you should definitely take time to prepare your home for the natural disaster. Taking steps to help ensure the safety of your home and loved ones will give you greater peace of mind. Don't be caught off guard—have a plan and safety measures in place in case a tornado affects your home.

Conclusion

If your home is in danger of tornado damage, take the necessary precautions for yourself and your family. You'll have peace of mind knowing you've done everything in your control to strengthen the safety of your home. If you have any questions, or if you're looking for additional safety tips, visit www.yourlocalsecurity.com.

Recommended Resources

Tornado Safety Tips:

<http://environment.nationalgeographic.com/environment/natural-disasters/tornado-safety-tips/>

Emergency Preparedness and Response:

<http://www.bt.cdc.gov/disasters/tornadoes/during.asp>

Signs of Tornadoes and Preparedness:

<http://www.spc.noaa.gov/faq/tornado/safety.html>

Preparedness and Recovery:

<http://www.epa.gov/naturalevents/tornadoes.html>

Tornado Warnings and Preparedness:

<http://emergency.cdc.gov/disasters/tornadoes/prepared.asp>

How to Prepare Your Home and Family:

<http://www.wikihow.com/Prepare-for-a-Tornado>

Tornado Preparation:

<http://nilesema.com/tornadotips.htm>

Emergency Kit Checklist

Every household should have an emergency kit, and you should customize it to your family's individual needs, but here are the essentials you should include:

Food and Water

- Water (three gallons per person, per day)
- 3-day supply of non-perishable food
- Water purification tablets

Communication and Tools

- Battery-powered radio
- Waterproof matches
- Flashlight with batteries
- Wrench or pliers
- Pocket knife
- Whistle

First Aid and Hygiene

- First aid kit
- Moist sanitary wipes
- Medications

Other

- Photocopies of important documents in a waterproof bag or container
- Cash
- Sleeping bags or blankets
- Cell phone charger, inverter, or solar charger

Once you've gathered all the supplies for your emergency kit, you should put it in an easy-to-grab carrying case, such as a backpack. Keep your emergency kit in a place where it's easily accessible, and make sure the entire family knows where it's kept. You'll feel better prepared for any emergency or disasters that come your way.

Visit www.yourlocalsecurity.com for more disaster preparedness information.

Emergency Communication Plans

Emergency Contact Info

Fill out the information on this page and post it in your home or write it down on a cards for each family member to carry in their wallet, purse, briefcase, or backpack.

Home Address:

Home Phone:

() -

Parent/Guardian phone numbers

Parent 1: _____ Parent 2: _____

Cell: () - Cell: () -

Work: () - Work: () -

Child contact info

List child names followed by the school they attend and cell-phone #'s, if available:

Other Emergency Contacts

Name: _____ Phone: () -

Name: _____ Phone: () -

Meeting Plan in the Event of an Emergency

When disaster strikes, know where you are and where you're supposed to be to meet up with your family members.

IF you're in the house or the immediate neighborhood (backyard, front yard, garage, next door neighbor, driveway, etc).

THEN everyone will meet at:

(ex: in front of the light post outside, fire hydrant, etc.)

IF you're far away from home, get in contact with your family ASAP using the *numbers on the Emergency Contact Info page*.

IF you're at school, follow the emergency plan that your school has in place.

School Emergency Plan: _____

Emergency Pet Plan

What will you do with your pets in the event of a natural disaster?

Important Considerations:

- Keep a current photo of your pet in case you lose them.
- Make sure ID tags are up-to-date and securely fastened to your pet's collar.
- Have a secure pet carrier, leash, or harness for your pet in case he/she panics.
- Take pet food, bottled water, meds, vet records, cat litter/pan, can opener, food dish, first aid kit, and other supplies you might need for your pet in an emergency situation.

Plan:

Emergency Plan for Seniors and Disabled Family Members

Important Considerations

- Make sure that you've assigned someone to check on seniors or disabled neighbors.
- Keep specialized items ready, including extra wheelchair batteries, oxygen, catheters, medication, food for service animals, and any other items you might need.
- Keep a list of the type and model numbers of the medical devices they require.
- Make provisions for medications that require refrigeration.
- Make arrangements for any assistance to get to a shelter.

Plan:

**For more information on this
and other natural disaster
safety information, visit:
www.yourlocalsecurity.com**