

TORNADOES

Learn how tornadoes form, the danger they create, and how to reduce damage in your community.

WHAT IS A TORNADO?

- Tornadoes are violently rotating columns of air that extend from a thunderstorm to the ground and collect dust, water droplets, and other debris as they cycle.
- Tornadoes regularly occur across the planet, with around 1,200 hitting the United States annually.
- Although tornadoes can happen anywhere and any time of year, "tornado season" is late spring to early summer and occurs in "Tornado Alley", or the Great Plains states.

TORNADO IMPACTS

- Loss of life can occur, especially during "violent tornadoes" (storms with 200+ mile per hour winds).
- Damages to homes, businesses, and infrastructure can cost local communities billions of dollars.
- Fires, chemical leaks, and water contamination are likely after a tornado happens and can seriously harm the surrounding environment.
- Although there isn't yet an observable link between climate change and tornadoes, research indicates that the impacts of tornadoes will very likely worsen as climate change does.



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BE PREPARED

- Listen to local radio stations and news broadcasts for updates on storm systems in your area.
- Identify a safe place in your home where people will gather during a tornado: a basement, storm cellar, or a room on the lowest floor with no windows to avoid shattering glass and debris are best.
- If in a high-rise building, try to get to the lowest floor safely, or find a windowless hallway in the middle of the building.
- Find a local emergency shelter and learn the fastest and safest routes there.
- Remove debris and loose objects from your yard, as they can become missiles in strong winds.
- Keep note of important phone numbers and addresses.

KNOW THE DIFFERENCE!

A tornado **WATCH** means a tornado is possible in your area. A tornado **WARNING** means a tornado is already occurring in your area. *GO TO A SAFE PLACE IMMEDIATELY.*

STAY SAFE DURING

- Remain far away from glass and other objects that can become hazards in the violent wind-storm conditions.
- Wear long sleeves, boots, and gloves in order to avoid injuries from debris.
- Use battery-powered lanterns instead of candles, if possible, to avoid the possibility of a fire occurring.
- Return home only if/when authorities say it is safe to do so.



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