



## Tornado Preparedness

**A tornado is arguably one of the most destructive types of storms imaginable. Unlike a hurricane or tropical storm, a tornado may develop almost without warning, appearing within minutes, leaving little time to react. The importance of being prepared cannot be overstated.**

Use the guidelines below to develop a personal tornado safety plan for you and your family. Remember you need to have a plan for wherever you may be when a tornado strikes - at home, at school, at work, on the road or in a public building.

Know what the threats are and be concerned about severe thunderstorms, wind, hail, lightning, flash flooding and tornadoes. Get to your safe shelter area quickly - you may only have seconds to act! **Your first step to surviving a tornado is to develop a plan before storms are on the horizon.**

These items would be extremely useful to have in your storm shelter, or to take with you to your storm shelter, when severe weather strikes.

- Disaster Supply Kit** - you should store your emergency supplies as close to your shelter as possible.
- Battery Operated Weather Radio** - You will want to be able to monitor the latest information directly from your National Weather Service.
- A Map to Track Storms** - You will need to be able to track the progress of the storm. Since warning texts include county names, a county outline map of your area is a great thing to keep handy. You might also keep a state highway map, which includes most of the cities and towns referred to in NWS warnings and statements.
- Shoes** - This will be very important if your home is damaged and you must walk across broken glass or other debris!
- Identification** - You may need identification to move around in the area should significant damage occur.
- Car Keys** - If your car is drivable, you will need the keys to be able to use it. It's a good idea to keep an extra set in your shelter area.
- Cell Phone** - If there is phone service, you will certainly want your phone. However, remember that cell phone service may be interrupted after a tornado or other disasters!
- Check and replace batteries** in your weather radio, flashlights and other devices in your safety kit regularly, preferably twice a year.
- Check your disaster supplies kit** often, as well to maintain fresh food and water, etc. Remember that your disaster supplies kit could also be critical in other types of disasters, including winter storms, etc.

### **Get In – Get Down – Cover Up**

An underground storm shelter or basement, or a safe room is usually the safest place. If you cannot get below ground, get to the lowest floor, as far inside a sturdy building as possible. Stay away from doors and windows. Put as many walls between you and the tornado as you can. Cover up – use pillows, blankets and helmets to protect your head and body. Being outside, in a vehicle or in a mobile home are all dangerous places.

<http://www.crisisresponse.org>