

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. A specially-constructed “safe room” within a building offers the best protection.
- If a basement is not available, move to a small interior room on the lowest floor and cover yourself with anything close at hand: towels, blankets, pillows. If possible, get under a sturdy table, desk or counter. Put as many walls as possible between you and the storm. Stay away from windows.
- If caught outdoors, seek shelter in a sturdy building. If you cannot quickly walk to a shelter, get into a vehicle, buckle your seatbelt and drive to the closest sturdy shelter. If flying debris occurs while you are driving, pull over and park. Now you have two options as a last resort:
 - Stay in the vehicle with the seatbelt on and place your head below the windows.
 - If you can safely get noticeably lower than the roadway, exit the vehicle and lie in that area, covering your head with your hands. Do not seek shelter under an overpass.
- 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.
- Make sure you have **multiple ways** to receive weather information. A NOAA Weather Radio, access to local TV and radio stations, and smart phone apps can keep you informed when severe weather threatens.



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: 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.

***Don't be caught surprised!
Always have a way to receive the very latest
forecasts and warnings from the National Weather Service.***

Family Disaster Plan

Be Ready!

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

Where will your family be when disaster strikes? Family members 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? A 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. For more information on developing your family disaster plan, go to ReadyWisconsin:

<https://readywisconsin.wi.gov/make-a-plan/>

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.
- ✓ Special items for infant, elderly, or disabled family members.
- ✓ Don't forget about your pets and their food and medicine.

For other suggestions for your disaster kit, go to ReadyWisconsin:

<http://readywisconsin.wi.gov/make-a-kit/>

Did You Know...

Wisconsin Tornado Weather Facts

- There were 33 tornadoes in Wisconsin in 2018, which is above average. In the last 15 years we've had as many as 62 twisters and as few as four.
- The peak tornado season in Wisconsin is April to August, but they can occur any time of year, like the two tornadoes in Kenosha County on January 7, 2008. February is the only month without a reported tornado in Wisconsin.
- 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 165 mph.

Other Weather Awareness Dates in Wisconsin

WI NOAA Weather
Radio All Hazards Day
May 1, 2019

WI Heat Awareness
Day *June 5, 2019*

WI Lightning Safety
Awareness Day
June 25, 2019

WI Winter Weather
Awareness Week
November 4-8, 2019

Severe Weather Watches and Warnings

When conditions are favorable for severe weather to develop, the National Weather Service (NWS) will issue a WATCH. When a Watch is issued, make sure you have a source of weather information in the event storms begin to form.

When severe weather has formed, NWS meteorologists will issue a WARNING to immediately alert the public about the dangerous weather and to advise them to seek appropriate shelter.

Watches and Warnings are relayed to local radio and television stations and are broadcast on NOAA Weather Radio.

Public safety officials also get the Warnings and can activate local warning systems, like outdoor sirens, 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 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 storm with large hail and damaging winds has been reported or indicated by weather radar. Seek shelter now.

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.

NOAA National Weather Service

<http://weather.gov>

Click on your part of the state for local weather information

Find the NWS on Facebook

<http://facebook.com>

Search for your NWS Office name

Follow the NWS on Twitter

<http://twitter.com>

Search for your NWS Office name

For Kids: Be a Force of Nature!

<http://weather.gov/grb/prep>

Tornado Preparedness Plan for Schools

<http://www.weather.gov/arx/schoolprep>

Wisconsin Emergency Management

<http://emergencymanagement.wi.gov>

ReadyWisconsin

Web - <http://readywisconsin.wi.gov>

Facebook - <http://www.facebook.com/ReadyWisconsin>

Twitter - @ReadyWisconsin

Instagram - <http://www.instagram.com/ReadyWisconsin>

FEMA for Kids

<http://www.ready.gov/kids>

STEP (Student Tools for Emergency

Planning) <http://readywisconsin.wi.gov/STEP>

