

# Tornado Safety Recommendations

## Tornado Safety

During the spring and fall, weather conditions are suitable for tornadic activity to occur. When stormy weather moves in, tune in to your local radio or television station for the latest weather updates. Plan ahead with your family so that everyone knows ahead of time what to do in case of a tornado or other severe weather. Designate a “contact person” in another part of town or elsewhere that can be called by everyone in case family members become separated.

## What should I do to prepare for a tornado?

- During any storm, listen to local news or a NOAA Weather Radio to stay informed about watches and warnings.
- Pick a safe room in your home where household members and pets may gather during a tornado. This should be a basement, storm cellar or an interior room on the lowest floor with no windows.
- Practice periodic tornado drills so that everyone knows what to do if a tornado is approaching.
- Consider having a designated safe room.

## Terminology

- A tornado “watch” means that a tornado is possible.
- A tornado “warning” means that a tornado has been spotted or is strongly indicated on radar. You should immediately seek shelter when a tornado “warning” is issued for your area.

## Conditions to watch for:

- A dark or green-colored sky.
- A large, dark, low-lying cloud.
- Large hail.
- A strange quiet that occurs within or shortly after the thunderstorm.
- Clouds moving by very fast, especially in a rotating pattern or converging toward one area of the sky.
- A sound a little like a waterfall or rushing air at first, but turning into a roar as it comes closer. The sound of a tornado has been compared to that of railroad trains or jets.
- Debris dropping from the sky.
- An obvious "funnel-shaped" cloud that is rotating, or debris such as branches or leaves being pulled upwards, even if no funnel cloud is visible.

## Homes or other small buildings

- Go to a basement or to an interior room on the lowest floor, such as a closet or bathroom
- Seek shelter under stairs or heavy piece of furniture (such as a table) or in a tub. Put as many walls between you and the tornado as possible
- Cover yourself with a mattress, pillows, blankets or quilt to protect against flying debris

## Schools, shopping centers or other facilities

- Leave auditoriums, gyms and other free-span rooms
- Go to interior small rooms or halls on the lowest floor
- Stay away from exterior walls or glassy areas
- Crouch down to make the smallest “target” possible. If you have something to cover your head, do so, otherwise, use your hands

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## Buildings

- Find an interior room or hallway away from glass partitions or windows
- Central stairways are a good place to seek shelter
- Stay out of the elevators, if the building loses power, you may be in the elevator for a long time

## Mobile homes

- Abandon them immediately!
- Prepare ahead of time by asking the mobile home park management the location of shelters

## In a car or outside with no suitable structure nearby

- Never try to outrun a tornado in a car, leave the vehicle and find a low lying area or ditch and use your hands to cover your head
- **Do Not** take cover in an underpass. Debris flying under the underpass could be very deadly

## The Conover Fire Department suggests that you assemble a "disaster supplies kit" that you keep in your shelter area. It should contain:

- A first aid kit with essential medication in addition to the usual items.
- A battery powered radio, flashlight, and extra batteries.
- Canned and other non-perishable food and a hand operated can opener.
- Bottled water.
- Candles and matches.
- Sturdy shoes and work gloves.
- Written instructions on how to turn off your homes utilities.
  
- Additional information on tornado safety or any other disaster preparedness project:
- [Disaster Assistance](#)
  - <http://www.disasterassistance.gov/>
- [Federal Emergency Management Administration](#)
  - <http://www.fema.gov/>
- [Storm Prediction Center](#)
  - <http://www.spc.noaa.gov/>
- [Disaster Assistance](#)
  - <http://www.disasterassistance.gov/>
- [Ready.gov](#)
  - <http://www.ready.gov/>
- [How to Prepare for a Tornado](#)
  - [http://www.fema.gov/media-library-data/1409003506195-52740fd2983079a211d041f7aea6b85d/how\\_to\\_prepare\\_tornado\\_033014\\_508.pdf](http://www.fema.gov/media-library-data/1409003506195-52740fd2983079a211d041f7aea6b85d/how_to_prepare_tornado_033014_508.pdf)