



MAFES Dawg Tracks

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Safety Tips: Protection from Tornadoes



Well, here we are close to the end of another tornado season. Tornadoes originate from powerful thunderstorms and have the capability of devastating an area in seconds. These funnel-shaped clouds, depending upon their size and velocity can wreak havoc on a total community or town. Their range can affect a path up to 1 mile wide and 50 miles long with wind speeds up to a swirling 300 miles per hour. Some interesting facts regarding tornadoes:

- 1,000 per year touch down in the U.S.A.
- 3 out of 4 tornadoes in the world occur in the U.S.

Following are some facts regarding tornadoes that shall prove helpful in identifying and watching for one, if a watch should occur in your area:

- Some are clearly visible, while rain or low-hanging clouds can obscure others.
- Some advance so fast that you have very little time to prepare for them.
- They normally occur at the end of a thunderstorm, where the wind will die down and the air becomes very still.
- You may not see the funnel-cloud, but you can see a trail of dust and/or debris following it.
- The average tornado travels from Southeast to Northeast, but have been known to travel in any direction.
- They have been known to reach 300 Mph, but the average speed is in the range of 30 Mph to 70 Mph.
- They can accompany tropical storms and hurricanes as they approach land.
- Water spouts are tornadoes that form over water.
- The peak tornado season in our southern states is from March through May and in the north its late spring through early summer and are most frequently reported east of the Rocky Mountains.
- They likely occur between 3:00 pm & 9:00 pm, but can occur at other times as well.

WHAT YOU SHOULD DO BEFORE A TORNADO-

Be alert for changing weather conditions-

- ✓ Listen to a NOAA Weather Radio, commercial radio or television newscasts for the most current information.
- ✓ Look for approaching storms
- ✓ Look for the following danger signals:
 - ~Dark, often greenish sky
 - ~Large hail
 - ~A large, dark low-lying cloud (particular if it is rotating)
 - ~A loud roar, resembling an approaching freight train.

WHAT YOU SHOULD DO DURING A TORNADO-

If you are under a tornado warning – Seek shelter immediately!
If you are:

In a structure, residence, small building, school, nursing home, hospital, factory, shopping center, or high-rise building –

- Go to a pre-designated shelter area such as a basement, safe room, or the lowest building level.
- If none of the above is available –go to the center of an interior room on the lowest level possible. Away from windows, doors, corners or outside walls.
- Put as many outside walls as possible between you and the outside walls.
- Get under a sturdy table and cover your head and neck with your arms.
- Do not open any windows.

In a vehicle, trailer, or mobile home-

- Get out and go to the lowest floor of a sturdy, nearby building or a storm shelter.
- Mobile homes with tie-downs offer very little protection.

Outside with no shelter-

- Lie flat in a nearby ditch or depression and cover your head with your hands. Be alert for flood conditions.
- Do not get under an overpass or bridge. You are safer in a low, flat location.
- Do not attempt to outrun a tornado in a vehicle in an urban or rural area. Leave the vehicle and get to a safe shelter.
- Watch for flying debris. Flying debris causes most fatalities and injuries.

ENSURE YOUR SAFETY AFTER THE TORNADO-

The first thing to do, obviously, is to check the health and safety of your family. Check for possible safety issues and monitor their health and well-being.

Aiding the Injured-

- Check for injuries. Do not attempt to move seriously injured persons unless they are in immediate danger of death or further injury.
- If it is necessary to move an unconscious person, first stabilize their head and neck, and then call for help immediately.
- If the victim isn't breathing, carefully position for CPR, clear the airway, and commence CPR.
- Maintain their body temperature with blankets, being careful not to allow them to overheat.
- Do not attempt to give unconscious person liquids.

Personal Health Tips-

- Beware of exhaustion - pace yourself to avoid over tiring.
- Drink plenty of water - eat well and wear study work boots and gloves.
- Wash your hands thoroughly when working in debris.

Safety Issues-

- ❖ Watch for safety issues (after the tornado) - washed out roads, damaged electrical lines, contaminating buildings and/or water, broken glass, gas leaks, etc.
- ❖ Inform local authorities concerning all health issues mentioned above to be aware of.

General Overview of Returning Home Tips-

- Do not return or enter your home until the area has been declared safe by the authorities.
- Have a battery-powered radio and lights for weather updates and to guide you through darkened areas.
- Be watching for snakes or wild animals that could attack.
- Walk around the home to check for gas leaks, structural damage, and loose power lines. If you have any doubts about the safety of these items, call in professional help.
- If you do enter the home, be aware of possible live power lines and live appliances, slippery floors, natural gas leaks, interior structure damage, water and/or sewage problems and other potential hazards resulting from the tornado damage.
- Contact your insurance agent for help - take pictures of damaged areas and contents. Keep good records of all cleanup and repair invoices.

WORK TO BE SAFE-
BE SAFE
SO YOU CAN WORK!