

## Tornado

Tornadoes are nature's most violent storms. A tornado appears as a rotating, funnel-shaped cloud that extends from a thunderstorm to the ground with whirling winds that can reach 300 miles per hour. Damage paths can be in excess of one mile wide and 50 miles long. Some tornadoes are clearly visible, while rain or nearby low-hanging clouds obscure others. Occasionally, tornadoes develop so rapidly that little, if any, advance warning is possible. Before a tornado hits, the wind may die down and the air may become very still. A cloud of debris can mark the location of a tornado even if a funnel is not visible. Tornadoes generally occur near the trailing edge of a thunderstorm. It is not uncommon to see clear, sunlit skies behind a tornado.



### Know Your Tornado Terms

#### Tornado Watch

Tornadoes are possible. Remain alert for approaching storms.

#### Tornado Warning

A tornado has been sighted or indicated by weather radar.

Take shelter immediately.

### What to Do During a Tornado

**If you are under a tornado warning, seek shelter immediately!**

#### If You are in a structure

Go to a pre-designated shelter area such as a safe room, basement, storm cellar, or the lowest building level. If there is no basement, go to the center of an interior room on the lowest level (closet, interior hallway) away from corners, windows, doors, and outside walls. Put as many walls as possible between you and the outside. Get under a sturdy table and use your arms to protect your head and neck. Do not open windows.

#### If You are in a Vehicle, Trailer, or Mobile Home

Get out immediately and go to the lowest floor of a sturdy, nearby building or a storm shelter. Mobile homes, even if tied down, offer little protection from tornadoes.

#### If You are Outside with No Shelter

Lie flat in a nearby ditch or depression and cover your head with your hands. Be aware of the potential for flooding.

Do not get under an overpass or bridge. You are safer in a low, flat location.

Never try to outrun a tornado in urban or congested areas in a car or truck. Instead, leave the vehicle immediately for safe shelter.

Watch out for flying debris. Flying debris from tornadoes causes most fatalities and injuries. ■

**Flying  
Debris**

