

Are You Ready for a Tornado?



Forget the notion that "twisters" only happen in the Midwest. Tornadoes have been reported in every state. And although they generally occur during spring and summer, they can happen any time of the year.

With winds swirling at 200 miles an hour or more, a tornado can destroy just about anything in its path. Generally, there are weather signs and warnings that will alert you to take precautions.

Be prepared by having various family members do each of the items on the checklist below. Then get together to discuss and finalize your Family Disaster Plan.

_____ **Pick a safe place in your home where family members could gather during a tornado. (If you have a basement, make it your safe place. If you do not have a basement, consider an interior hallway or room on the lowest floor.) Make sure there are no windows or glass doors in the area. Keep this place uncluttered.**

Basement: Yes No

If yes, basement is your safe place.

If no (or if you are in a high-rise building), choose another safe place.

Location of safe place: _____

_____ **If you live in a mobile home, choose another safe place in a nearby sturdy building. (If your mobile home park has a designated shelter, make it your safe place.)**

Location of safe place: _____

_____ **Put together a Disaster Supplies Kit in a clearly labeled, easy-to-grab container.**

Location of Disaster Supplies Kit: _____

_____ **Write instructions on how to turn off your home's electricity, water, and gas if advised to do so by local authorities. (A professional must turn gas service back on.)**

Instructions written: _____ (date)

_____ **Make sure all family members know the name of the county or parish where you live or are traveling, because tornado WATCHES and WARNINGS are issued for county or parish.**

Name of county/parish where you live: _____

Name of county/parish where you are traveling: _____

Discuss with your family what you will do when a tornado WATCH or WARNING is issued.

And remember . . . when a tornado, earthquake, flood, hurricane, or other emergency happens in your community, you can count on your local American Red Cross chapter to be there to help you and your family. Your Red Cross is not a government agency and depends on contributions of your time, money, and blood.

For more information, contact your local Red Cross chapter, National Weather Service office, or emergency management agency. You can also visit these Web sites:

American Red Cross: www.redcross.org

National Weather Service: www.nws.noaa.gov

Federal Emergency Management Agency: www.fema.gov

Your local contact is:

