



Tornadoes strike quickly, with little or no warning. High winds can damage buildings, overturn vehicles, uproot or damage trees. Preparing before a tornado can help to preserve life, minimize damage and speed your recovery.

Before a Tornado

- **Determine the risk of tornadoes in your area.**
 - A map of high risk areas is available at www.fema.gov/areyouready/tornadoes.shtm.
- **Know the terminology.**
 - A **tornado WATCH** is issued when weather conditions favor the formation of tornadoes, for example, during a severe thunderstorm -- be prepared to take shelter immediately if conditions worsen.
 - A **tornado WARNING** is issued when a tornado funnel is sighted or indicated by weather radar -- You should take shelter immediately!
- **Check weather reports before planning work activities.**
 - Have a way of receiving weather information while you work, especially at remote locations.
 - Monitor for tornadoes in your area at the National Weather Service Active Watch and Warnings. <http://www.weather.gov/>
- **Create an emergency plan of action.**
 - Know your area's warning signals for tornado watches and warnings. As soon as you hear the signal, take cover.
 - Carry a first aid kit, flashlight, and battery operated radio on all farm equipment.
 - Carry a cellular phone or portable radio to contact family or farm employees.
- **Develop a communication plan with your family and employees or co-workers.**
 - Know how to contact each other in the event of severe weather, especially if you are in separate locations.
 - Establish shelter locations on your property.
- **Identify potential hazards on your property.**
 - Secure structurally unstable materials (e.g. lumber, logs, equipment, fuel tanks), and loose equipment and materials (e.g., buckets, tools, etc.) which can become dangerous if airborne.
 - Fix loose siding, roofing, fence posts, etc., as these can become dangerous projectiles in high winds.
 - Know how to turn off electrical power, gas and water supplies for building on the farm.

- **Stockpile emergency materials.**
 - Plywood, lumber, nails, hammer, saw, pry bar
 - Wire and rope to secure objects
 - Fire extinguishers at all barns and in all vehicles
 - A safe supply of food to feed livestock
 - A gas-powered generator in case of power failure
- **Make a list of your farm inventory, include:**
 - Livestock (species, number of animals)
 - Crops (acres, type)
 - Machinery and equipment (make, model #)
 - Hazardous substances (e.g., pesticides, fertilizers, fuels, medicines, other chemicals)
- **Review your insurance coverage.**

During a Tornado

- **Stay informed.**
 - Listen to the radio or television for situation developments.
- **If a WARNING is issued – Seek shelter immediately!**
- **Never try to outrun a tornado.**
 - Get off of farm machinery and get as far away from it as possible.
- **If possible, get inside a sturdy building.**
 - The safest place is an inside room on the lowest floor.
 - Avoid windows, or glass doors, which can be broken by strong winds or hail and cause damage or injury.
 - Avoid long span buildings as these are often supported solely by the outside walls and can be dangerous during severe weather situations.
 - For added protection, get under something sturdy, such as a heavy table or workbench.
 - If possible, cover your body with a blanket or sleeping bag; protect your head with anything available--even your hands.
- **If no adequate shelter immediately available,**
 - Lie flat in the nearest ditch or other low lying area.
 - Cover your head and neck with your arms.
 - Stay away from trees.
 - Do not get under any vehicle, no matter what its size.

After a Tornado

- **Continue to monitor your battery-powered radio or television for emergency information.**
- **Assess the situation.**
 - Survey damage to your home, buildings, equipment, livestock and crops.
 - Identify sharp objects, dangerous materials, downed power lines, damaged gas lines, or other hazards (e.g., chemical spills).
 - Check for power outages.
- **Clean up safely.**
 - Wear sturdy shoes or boots, long sleeves, and gloves.
 - Be aware of hazards that may cause injury to you or others cleaning up - these can include chain saw injuries, electrical or chemical hazards.
 - Use caution with gas powered equipment – dangerous carbon monoxide can be generated; use in well ventilated areas.
- **Account for your inventory.**
 - Account for all livestock, fuels, chemicals, machinery and equipment; use the inventory list prepared prior to the incident.
 - Note any livestock losses.
 - Check machinery and equipment for damage.
 - Take photographs of all damage for insurance or emergency assistance purposes.
 - Report any hazardous materials (e.g., fuels, agricultural chemicals) spills or leaks to emergency response personnel.

- **Care for the livestock.**
 - Make sure that livestock have food and water.
 - Remove any debris that may cause injury.
 - Dispose of dead carcasses.
- **Farm disaster assistance.**
 - Disaster assistance for farms may be available from the USDA's Farm Service Agency <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/>.

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