



TORNADOES

Tornadoes are violent, rotating cylinders that can have wind speeds in excess of 300 mph, be more than a mile wide and cover approximately 50 miles during destruction. As one of the [more common natural disaster risks](#) the state faces, it is imperative Hoosiers are prepared before one occurs.

TERMS TO KNOW

A variety of weather terms are used during natural disasters such as tornadoes, and while they may sound similar, there is an important difference among them.

- **Tornado Watch:** Conditions for a tornado is favorable.
- **Tornado Warning:** A tornado is reported or the weather radar indicates one could develop soon.

BEFORE A TORNADO

Meteorologists can predict these violent forces of nature, but even with warning tornados can still be devastating. The best protection against them is by being prepared.

- Make sure preparedness kits are portable for easy transport if evacuation is necessary. Preparedness kits should be tailored to household needs.
- Understand the risk of tornadoes in local areas and recognize the warning signs that indicate a tornado could or is forming.
- Tornados can occur at any time, and often happen at night. Conduct household tornado drills at various times during the day, so everyone is prepared for all eventualities
- Identify safe places to shelter. For optimal protection, choose basements, inner rooms and storm cellars away from doors, windows and outer walls.
- Review and practice severe weather plans created by employers.
- If applicable, understand severe weather plans of local schools.
- Purchase and configure an all-hazard weather radio and have more than one way to get weather alerts.

DURING A TORNADO

- Move to one of the identified safe locations and cover the head and neck with arms. Blankets, pillows and furniture can provide additional protection.
- If in a vehicle, the best choice is to get out and take shelter in a strong building. If no building is available, stay in the vehicle, lower the head below the window and place arms over the neck and head to guard against injuries.
- Do not take shelter in underpass. Strong winds can cause damage to the structure and cause it to collapse.
- Individuals living in mobile or manufactured homes should move to a shelter with a strong foundation.
- If possible, bring pets indoors and secure them to prevent escaping.

AFTER A TORNADO

Tornadoes have the ability to destroy buildings, uproot trees and leave behind a large amount of dangerous debris. Recovering from a devastating tornado can be a lengthy and hazardous process. The following tips can make the recovery process slightly easier:

- Stay out of damaged buildings until they have been inspected and cleared by a building official.
- Help others, especially those who might be trapped or injured.
- Reserve phone calls for emergencies. Phone wires may be damaged and have limited access.
- Stay away from downed power lines.
- Be aware of possible water, gas or oil leaks.
- Monitor radio, television, website or social media reports for further instructions.

