

Tornado Myths:

MYTH: Areas near rivers, lakes, mountains, and even cities are safe from tornadoes. No place is safe from tornadoes. They can cross rivers, travel up mountains, roar through valleys and hit major metropolitan areas. The great Tri-State tornado of 1925, the deadliest tornado ever recorded, crossed both the Mississippi and Wabash Rivers.

MYTH: Open windows in your house to equalize pressure. Do not do this! Your house will not "explode" due to a tornado passing over it, and taking time to open windows reduces your ability to seek safe shelter in time. Plus, opening windows allows damaging winds to enter the structure.

MYTH: Get to (or away from) the southwest corner of the building for safety. The safest place in a building is in a small, reinforced room (bathroom or closet) near the center of the building, on the lowest floor (preferably below ground). Safer yet, of course, is a shelter specifically designed for tornado safety.

MYTH: Mobile homes attract tornadoes. This myth probably came from the tendency of tornadoes to demolish mobile homes while leaving nearby structures only slightly damaged. Mobile homes can be severely damaged even by weak tornadoes. If the mobile home is not tied down, it is even vulnerable to 50 mph winds.

MYTH: Low pressure with a tornado causes buildings to "explode" as the tornado passes overhead. Violent winds and debris slamming into buildings cause most structural damage.

MYTH: If you are caught out in the open, you should seek shelter under highway overpasses. Seeking shelter under an overpass puts you at greater risk of being killed or seriously injured by flying debris from the powerful tornadic winds. Airborne debris is blown into and channeled under the overpass. Debris of varying sizes and types moving at incredible speeds can easily penetrate clothing and skin causing serious injuries and possibly death. A person could be blown out or carried away from the overpass by the fierce tornado winds. People positioned at the top of the overpass encounter even higher wind speeds and more missile-like debris.

For latest forecast call:
National Weather Service's
Weather Information Now:
Paducah, KY :270-744-6331
Evansville, IN: 812-425-5549
<http://weather.gov/paducah>

This Brochure is brought to you by:

The Kentucky Weather Preparedness Committee - Western Division and the Daviess County Emergency Management Agency

Our vision - To educate and prepare every Kentuckian for potentially life-threatening weather events and consequences.

The Kentucky Weather Preparedness Committee is comprised of members from the National Weather Service, Emergency Management, Media and other private, public & government entities.

Daviess County Emergency Management focuses efforts on the life threatening weather events impacting Daviess County



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Severe Weather Preparedness Guide For Your Church



What will your congregation do if a tornado strikes?



3rd Baptist Church, Owensboro, KY
October 2007



March is Severe Weather Awareness Month

This is the beginning of tornado season; not even churches are immune from the wrath of nature's destructive storm systems. Now is a good time to establish a plan for your church in the event of one of nature's surprises.

Every church should have a well-thought out plan and clearly labeled tornado safety locations. Emergency Managers are happy to assist in determining safe locations.

In an average year, 800 tornadoes are reported nationwide, resulting in 80 deaths and 1500 injuries.

Tornadoes can happen any time of the year and any time of the day. In our area, peak tornado occurrence is March through May and most likely to occur between 3:00 pm and 9:00 pm, but can occur at any time of the day.

One of the most important things you can do to prevent being injured or killed in a tornado is to be alert to the possibility of severe weather. Most deaths and injuries happen to people who are unaware and uninformed.



Seventh Day Adventist Church, Owensboro, KY

January 3, 2000

What is a tornado?

A violently rotating column of air pendant from a thunderstorm and in contact with the ground.

When the National Weather Service issues a TORNADO WATCH:
This means tornadoes are possible in your area. Watch the sky and listen to your radio or T.V. for updates.

When the National Weather Service issues a TORNADO WARNING:
This means a tornado has been detected on radar or one has been spotted on the ground. Take immediate action—Take cover.

What you can do BEFORE the storm hits:

- Develop a plan for your place of worship and know where your designated shelter is located BEFORE the storm season begins. Learn locations of bathrooms, storage rooms or other interior shelter areas away from windows, and the shortest ways to get there.
- Know the county in which you live, and keep a highway map near the shelter to follow storm movement from weather bulletins.
- Have frequent drills.
- Have a NOAA Weather Radio with a warning alarm tone and battery back-up to receive warnings. This is especially important for country churches out of hearing distance of community warning sirens. Listen to radio and television for information. Do you have a person in the church that will monitor approaching weather risk? Have someone in the building that could advise of severe weather approaching (Deacon, Church Member or Usher)

- Does your organization have a warning system? When severe weather approaches and your building has a large group of people, it is important to have a signal to take cover. (Announcement over PA or Flashing Light)
- In churches, move out of large rooms such as the sanctuary or fellowship hall areas. The safest areas are interior hallways, small rooms opposite to the approach of the storm, bathrooms, closets, under tables and chairs in basement areas. The latter are preferable.
- Large rooms with poorly supported roofs are not considered safe areas in tornadoes. Auditoriums, gymnasiums, and church sanctuaries are examples of such structures.
- After evacuating the sanctuary, the pastor should consider continuing the worship service, providing quiet assurance in the midst of the stress of the moment; or someone could lead hymn singing until the danger has passed.
- If planning a church trip outdoors, listen to the latest forecasts and take necessary action if threatening weather is possible.
- Help your place of worship by putting together an emergency storm kit to include a battery powered am/fm radio, flashlight, batteries, bottled water, blankets and simple first-aid items in a waterproof container.
- Have a pre-determined place to meet after a disaster.
- Watch children closely. Hugs are important in frightening situations.

