

Editorial - Tornado Season

TORNADO SEASON IS UPON US

It is that time again when we expect to have severe weather and tornadoes. When the sirens go, the panic starts because people are unprepared, don't know where to go or what to do. You should know the difference between a tornado watch and a tornado warning.

In general, a WATCH is when conditions are possible for a tornado and the National Weather Service has issued an alert to that effect. A WARNING is issued when a tornado has been sighted or indicated by radar. At work go to your designated shelter. In general this is the lowest level of your building, in interior rooms, and away from glass. At home, go to the basement or lower level of the building. If there is no basement, go to inner hallways or small inner rooms without a window (bathroom/closet).

Action News, WOWT6 gives warnings by county names. Copies of the information sheets showing counties and location of storms/tornadoes are available upon request from Environmental Health and Safety at 546-6400. When weather appears to be threatening, it is appropriate to turn on your radio or TV and listen to the reports. When a warning siren is sounded, it is appropriate to take shelter immediately. All too often today, a siren is a signal that, to some, means go outside and look for the funnel. DON'T DO IT! Go to your shelter and remain there until the all clear is given. Yes, it is inconvenient! Yes, you have better things to do or places to be. Yes this and yes that, but ask yourself one question please. "Is it worth risking my life just to see a twister?"

AFTER A TORNADO HITS

Well, the worst just happened-a tornado has struck and now what. Here are a few tips that may be of great use:

- **GAS LEAKS:** If you smell leaking gas, leave your home or the work area immediately and call the gas company. Lanterns/torches/electrical sparks/and smoking materials could cause an explosive fire. **DO NOT TURN ON ANY LIGHT SWITCHES.**
- **ELECTROCUTION:** Check utility lines and appliances for damage. If wiring appears damaged, turn off the current at the main fuse box or circuit breaker.
- **STRUCTURAL DAMAGE:** Watch for falling debris, and or the possibility of collapse.
- **WATER:** If water pipes are damaged, do not use water from the tap; it may be contaminated. Damaged sewage systems must be serviced ASAP-they are health hazards and should be reported immediately.

EMERGENCY SUPPLIES FOR TORNADO SEASON (OR Y2K)

1. Flashlight and extra batteries.
2. Portable battery operated radio and extra batteries.
3. First-aid kit and manual: essential (prescription medications).
4. Emergency food, water, cooking equipment, can opener.
5. Warm clothing/blankets.

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