



Tornado Safety: 2013

Practical Steps for Weather-Related Emergencies



Campbell County Public Safety

One County, One Mission, One Call Away

Tornado Preparedness Day - March 12, 2013



As 62 tornadoes struck VA over the past two years, the Virginia Department of Emergency Management and NOAA will conduct a state-wide tornado drill on Tuesday, March 12, 2013, 9:45 a.m.

Citizens, businesses, schools and organizations are encouraged register to participate by visiting <http://www.vaemergency.gov/readyvirginia/stayinformed/tornadoes>

Registration is not required, but by practicing safety steps, regardless of location, employees and citizens can minimize risk should a weather-related emergency occur in the Central Virginia area.

Weather-Related Emergencies Can Occur Anytime and Anywhere

- at home
- on the way to work
- during work hours
- departing work/traveling home
- during routine outings (shopping, banking, attending school, etc.)
- during vacations or special events.

Some basic steps can minimize risk to you, your family, and others.



Know the Difference: Tornado Watches and Tornado Warnings

TORNADO WATCH:

A tornado watch means that conditions are favorable for tornado-producing storms to occur.

TORNADO WARNING:

A tornado warning is an alert that indicates a tornado is either currently in progress or is imminent, based on radar. If a tornado warning is issued, citizens should take cover immediately .



If a Tornado Warning is Issued...

If indoors:

- Go to a basement or to the lowest building level. If a basement is not available, go to the center of an interior space, closet or hallway on the lowest possible level.
- Select a spot away from corners, windows, doors, and outside walls or seek shelter under a sturdy table.
- Assume a crouched/kneeling position and use your arms to protect your head and neck;
- Do not open windows.



Tornadoes Cont...

If outdoors:

- Lie flat in a nearby ditch or depression; cover your head with your hands. Be aware of potential flooding.
- Watch for flying debris; wind-tossed objects cause the most tornado-related fatalities and injuries.
- Check-in with your office/family members; indicate your location and condition.
- If not injured, check to see if you can assist others.



If in a Vehicle During a Tornado Warning...

- Never try to outrun a tornado; evacuate the vehicle immediately and seek shelter on the lowest floor of a sturdy, nearby building. If no shelter is available, you are safer in a ditch or low lying area than in your vehicle.
- Do not seek shelter under an overpass or bridge.
- DO NOT cross roadways obstructed with floodwaters, debris or downed power lines. Assume all downed power lines are live.
- Pull over in a safe location if your vision is hindered by precipitation; turn on caution lights to alert other drivers of your location.
- Tune into local radio stations for weather updates; check-in with your emergency contacts to indicate your location and condition.



Following a Tornado...

- Wait for an “all-clear” from safety officials before leaving the sheltering area;
- Check to see if anyone in your group is injured or needs assistance. If so, contact local emergency services. Call to check in with those on your emergency contact list.
- Be on the lookout for broken glass, sharp metal, live electrical lines, and/or other hazards in your area. Be aware of the potential for fires due to possible gas/fuel leaks or exposed electrical systems.
- Quickly (but safely) exit affected buildings; do not return to damaged sites until it is deemed safe by officials.
- Tune into local radio stations for regional weather, safety updates and shelter openings; do not assume the weather event is a single incident (often storm systems can create multiple outbreaks over a period of hours).



Preparing for a Weather Emergency...

- Review tornado safety procedures with family/social groups, or at office staff meetings.
- Discuss action steps and determine the sheltering location within your building(s);
- Contact local Public Safety staff if you have questions or need assistance with your family's/group's safety planning.
- Read preparedness materials offered by local, state and federal agencies.



Plan...

- Review the building layouts of your home and workplace;
- Pre-determine where you would go in case of tornadoes, floods, fire and other possible occurrences.
- Conduct practice drills throughout the year for various scenarios; review procedures should the need arise to direct family, co-workers, guests, or other citizens to safety.
- Note any special needs for yourself, your family, and your co-workers; work as teams to keep each other safe.
- Have an updated emergency plan that lists medical contacts, as well other important contact information (utility services, schools, financial institutions, insurance agencies, etc.).



Be Aware of Your Surroundings...

Taking a moment to mentally note your surroundings can mean the difference between remaining safe and being harmed should a tornado occur. Remember to determine safe sheltering locations while at:

- Public buildings (malls, government buildings, restaurants, grocery or retail stores, etc.);
- Worship services, social gatherings or family events;
- Theme parks or other entertainment attractions (theaters, sports arenas, festivals, ballparks, etc.);
- Hospitals or medical facilities.



For further information...

Visit:

www.campbellcountyva.gov

www.fema.gov

www.ready.gov

www.vaemergency.com

www.cdc.gov



or call Campbell County Public Safety Department at:

(434) 332-9540

(434) 283-9540

(434) 592-9540

BE SAFE!