

Tornado and Severe Weather Awareness For the City of Bowling Green

Storm Season: **Most** tornados occur between March and September, but they can strike at any time, day or night. Stay alert during severe thunderstorms. Watch for a spinning, funnel-shaped cloud or listen for a sound like the roar of a speeding train, the roar grows louder as the funnel cloud touches the ground. When nearby, a tornado has a loud sound comparable to the combined roars of several jet engines. Wherever you go, be aware of where you might take shelter. Stay tuned to your **TV/radio station** for information. **It could save your life.**

Tornados are relatively short-lived local storms. They are composed of violently rotating columns of air that descend in the familiar funnel shape form thunderstorm cloud systems. The weather conditions that tend to generate tornados are unseasonably warm and humid earth surface air, cold air at middle atmospheric levels, and strong upper-level jet stream winds. Tornados can occur anywhere in the United States during any month of the year. In Missouri, tornados frequently occur in April, May and June.

The destructive path of a tornado averages about 250 yards in width and 15 miles in length. In extreme conditions, it can travel more than 300 miles and leave a path of total destruction more than a mile wide. Tornados will travel up to 60 mph, with wind speeds approaching 400 mph within the tornado's center. Tornados usually travel from a westerly direction to an easterly direction.

Signs and Warnings

Know the difference between a tornado WATCH and a tornado WARNING.

A tornado watch indicates conditions are right for a tornado to develop and the sky should be watched.

A tornado warning indicates a tornado has been sighted or is spotted on radar. Warning will give the location of the tornado and the area immediately affected by the warning.

Remember, watch means watch the sky. Warning means take cover!

Preparedness

The best preparation for a tornado is to designate a safe place in or around your home as a tornado shelter. Shelters are safest if they are underground. If you do not have a basement, find shelter in a bathroom near an inside wall of your house on the ground floor. Cover yourself with mattresses. **Stay away from the windows!**

- Plan tornado drills with your family so everyone knows what to do.
- Know the location of the designated shelter where you work or go to school.
- Mobil homeowners should plan to evacuate to a safe structure. Even the most securely anchored mobile home is not safe in a tornado. **Do not** get under your mobile home.

Response

If you have a storm cell or shelter, take your family and go there immediately. If no shelter is available, go to your basement and get under a heavy workbench or stairs. **Do not** position yourself directly underneath heavy appliances on the floor above you. If your home has no basement, stay in the center of the house away from the windows or in a small room on the ground floor that is away from outside walls. Take cover under solid furniture or mattresses. **Protect your head!**

In mobile homes or vehicles, leave and take shelter in a substantial structure. If there is no nearby shelter, lie flat in the nearest ditch or ravine with your hands shielding your head. If you can, wrap something around your body like a blanket or sleeping bag.

Do not drive. You are safer in a home or basement shelter than in a car. If you are driving in a city and spot a tornado, get out of your car and go to a nearby building. If you are driving in open country, drive at a right angle away from the tornado's path if you can safely do so. **Do not try to out run the storm.** If you cannot avoid the tornado, get out of your car. Lie flat in the nearest depression, such as a ditch, culvert or ravine. Protect your head and stay low to the ground. **Do not take cover under the car or go into a grove of trees!**

After a tornado passes, keep tuned to the local radio or TV station to get an all-clear signal before leaving your shelter. Sometimes more than one tornado will develop during a violent storm. Re-enter buildings with extreme caution. Be alert to fire hazards such as broken electric wires or damaged electrical equipment, gas or oil leaks, or smoldering piles of wet hay or feed. Report utility damages to the appropriate authorities. Have damage to your property assessed by your insurance company.

Storm Shelter's Located in Bowling Green

- Bowling Green High School Gym. You must enter the gym from the parking lot located off Adams Street
- HNB Bank-700 Business Highway 61 S
- First Presbyterian Church Fellowship Hall-205 W Centennial
- Bowling Green Fire Department-16 W Church St
- Church of the Nazarene-807 South Court St

Note: Church of the Nazarene is the **only** shelter available for use prior to the arrival of potentially dangerous storm or tornado in the event persons have no safe shelter such as a mobile home.

All other emergency shelters are for the use in the aftermath of a damaging storm.

PLEASE KEEP THIS INFORMATION HANDY, IT MAY SAVE YOUR LIFE