

Al-Ikhlās Training Academy

TORNADO

Emergency Plan

For

Staff ~ Students ~ Parents

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Detroit, MI 48212

What is the difference between a tornado WATCH and a tornado WARNING?

A **TORNADO WATCH** means that conditions are favorable for the development of tornadoes. It doesn't mean that there is a tornado, it just means that there is a heightened risk of tornadoes in the watch area.

A **TORNADO WARNING** means that meteorologists at the National Weather Service have spotted rotation on a weather radar that indicates a tornado is possible or developing. Also, a tornado warning is issued if storm spotters, law enforcement, media or the public spots a tornado and reports it to 911 or the National Weather Service.

A **TORNADO EMERGENCY** is essentially an enhanced Tornado Warning. A Tornado Emergency means that a large, destructive tornado is on the ground and will impact your area very soon. Tornado Emergencies are rare, and the most serious of the three types of tornado alerts.

What do I do during a tornado?

1. **STAY CALM!** If you panic, you could do something to endanger yourself or others.
2. Do not try to outrun the tornado. Tornadoes are faster, bigger and stronger than you. They can change direction very fast.
3. Seek shelter underground if possible. Basements are great, but not everybody has them. If you do happen to have a basement, stay away from water heaters, furnaces or any other gas or electric powered machinery you have in your basement. If your basement has an interior room (closet under stairwell, bathroom, etc), that's the best place to huddle.
4. If you do not have a basement, seek shelter in an interior room on the lowest level of your home. Closets and bathrooms are usually your best bet.
5. If you live in a mobile home, go outside and seek shelter in a ditch or go into a sturdy building if you live very close to one (like, next door). Follow the instructions in number 6 below.
6. If you are outside or driving during a tornado, pull over to the nearest ditch or culvert, get out of your car and lie down as low as possible in said ditch or culvert. I don't care if it's muddy and icky -- it's better than being dead, right? Staying as low as possible is best to protect you from the incredible winds and flying debris.
7. **DO NOT HIDE UNDER AN OVERPASS!** Hiding in the girders/enclosed space under an overpass is the worst thing that you can do. The enclosed space actually enhances and speeds up the winds, so it's actually worse than going out and standing directly in the path of the tornado. Also, you run the risk of the bridge collapsing on you. Just don't do it.
8. **Drop and tuck.** If you went to school anywhere in the United States (well, maybe not), you had tornado drills. If not, the drop and tuck position is a simple way to keep yourself safe during a tornado. It may not be comfortable (especially if you're overweight) but, it's better than being dead.
9. **Do Not Ignore Tornado Warnings!** That is one of the worst things you can do. If you hear a tornado warning on TV, radio or via tornado siren, take it seriously. Do not risk your life and your loved one's lives by assuming it's a false alarm.

“Drop and tuck” safety position



This “drop and tuck” position, is the best way to protect yourself from flying debris in a tornado.

BEFORE A TORNADO

- To begin preparing, you should build an emergency kit and make a family communications plan.
- Listen to NOAA Weather Radio or to commercial radio or television newscasts for the latest information.
- In any emergency, always listen to the instructions given by local emergency management officials.
- Be alert to changing weather conditions. Look for approaching storms.
- Look for the following danger signs:
 - Dark, often greenish sky
 - Large hail
 - A large, dark, low-lying cloud (particularly if rotating)
 - Loud roar, similar to a freight train.
- If you see approaching storms or any of the danger signs, be prepared to take shelter immediately.

DURING A TORNADO

If you are under a tornado warning, seek shelter immediately! Most injuries associated with high winds are from flying debris, so remember to protect your head. If available, put on a bicycle or motorcycle helmet to protect yourself from head injuries.

If you are in: A structure (e.g. residence, small building, school, nursing home, hospital, factory, shopping center, high-rise building)

Then:

Go to a pre-designated shelter area such as a safe room, basement, storm cellar, or the lowest building level. If there is no basement, go to the center of an interior room on the lowest level (closet, interior hallway) away from corners, windows, doors, and outside walls. Put as many walls as possible between you and the outside.

If you are in a high-rise building:

Go to a small interior room or hallway on the lowest floor possible.

If available, put on a bicycle or motorcycle helmet to protect yourself from head injuries.

Put on sturdy shoes.

Do not open windows.

If you are in: A vehicle, trailer, or mobile home

Get out immediately and go to the lowest floor of a sturdy, nearby building or a storm shelter. Mobile homes, even if tied down, offer little protection from tornadoes.

If you are on: The outside with no shelter

Lie flat in a nearby ditch or depression and cover your head with your hands. Be aware of the potential for flooding.

Do not get under an overpass or bridge. You are safer in a low, flat location.

Never try to outrun a tornado in urban or congested areas in a car or truck. Instead, leave the vehicle immediately for safe shelter. Watch out for flying debris. Flying debris from tornadoes causes most fatalities and injuries.

AFTER A TORNADO

Injury may result from the direct impact of a tornado or it may occur afterward when people walk among debris and enter damaged buildings. A study of injuries after a tornado in Marion, Illinois, showed that 50 percent of the tornado-related injuries were suffered during rescue attempts, cleanup and other post-tornado activities. Nearly a third of the injuries resulted from stepping on nails. Because tornadoes often damage power lines, gas lines or electrical systems, there is a risk of fire, electrocution or an explosion. Protecting yourself and your family requires promptly treating any injuries suffered during the storm and using extreme care to avoid further hazards.

INJURIES

Check for injuries. Do not attempt to move seriously injured people unless they are in immediate danger of further injury. Get medical assistance immediately. If someone has stopped breathing, begin CPR if you are trained to do so. Stop a bleeding injury by applying direct pressure to the wound. Have any puncture wound evaluated by a physician. If you are trapped, try to attract attention to your location.

GENERAL SAFETY PRECAUTIONS

Here are some safety precautions that could help you avoid injury after a tornado:

- Continue to monitor your battery-powered radio or television for emergency information.
- Be careful when entering any structure that has been damaged.
- Wear sturdy shoes or boots, long sleeves and gloves when handling or walking on or near debris.

- Be aware of hazards from exposed nails and broken glass.
- Do not touch downed power lines or objects in contact with downed lines. Report electrical hazards to the police and the utility company.
- Use battery-powered lanterns, if possible, rather than candles to light homes without electrical power. If you use candles, make sure they are in safe holders away from curtains, paper, wood or other flammable items. Never leave a candle burning when you are out of the room.
- Never use generators, pressure washers, grills, camp stoves or other gasoline, propane, natural gas or charcoal-burning devices inside your home, basement, garage or camper - or even outside near an open window, door or vent. Carbon monoxide (CO) - an odorless, colorless gas that can cause sudden illness and death if you breathe it - from these sources can build up in your home, garage or camper and poison the people and animals inside. Seek prompt medical attention if you suspect CO poisoning and are feeling dizzy, light-headed or nauseated.
- Hang up displaced telephone receivers that may have been knocked off by the tornado, but stay off the telephone, except to report an emergency.
- Cooperate fully with public safety officials.
- Respond to requests for volunteer assistance by police, fire fighters, emergency management and relief organizations, but do not go into damaged areas unless assistance has been requested. Your presence could hamper relief efforts and you could endanger yourself.

INSPECTING THE DAMAGE

- After a tornado, be aware of possible structural, electrical or gas-leak hazards in your home. Contact your local city or county building inspectors for information on structural safety codes and standards. They may also offer suggestions on finding a qualified contractor to do work for you.
- In general, if you suspect any damage to your home, shut off electrical power, natural gas and propane tanks to avoid fire, electrocution or explosions.
- If it is dark when you are inspecting your home, use a flashlight rather than a candle or torch to avoid the risk of fire or explosion in a damaged home.
- If you see frayed wiring or sparks, or if there is an odor of something burning, you should immediately shut off the electrical system at the main circuit breaker if you have not done so already.
- If you smell gas or suspect a leak, turn off the main gas valve, open all windows and leave the house immediately. Notify the gas company, the police or fire departments, or State Fire Marshal's office and do not turn on the lights, light matches, smoke or do anything that could cause a spark. Do not return to your house until you are told it is safe to do so.

SAFETY DURING CLEAN UP

- Wear sturdy shoes or boots, long sleeves and gloves.
- Learn proper safety procedures and operating instructions before operating any gas-powered or electric-powered saws or tools.
- Clean up spilled medicines, drugs, flammable liquids and other potentially hazardous materials.