



Tornadoes are one of the most feared natural disasters that can cause great destruction within a matter of minutes. While most people know where to go in their home and what to do in the event of a tornado, what happens when a storm is approaching, and there are people in your building? What if it happens during worship or school? Do attendees know where to go for safety? Do you have the space and resources available to keep them free from harm? Do you have a plan in place?

If you are in an area where tornadoes are possible, it is important to be prepared. The key is advanced planning and swift response.

Ahead of Time

The following steps are intended to help you prepare and know how to respond to a tornado:

- Designate a Safety and Security Team, or individual member, to act as an emergency coordinator for your organization.
- Empower the team or person to develop a response plan for tornadoes and other emergencies.
- Communicate with and train staff members, volunteers, and other key people regarding what to do in emergency situations.
- Have someone available to monitor the radio if weather looks threatening in order to be ready to respond if there is a tornado warning issued.
- Design a communication method to let everyone in the facility quickly know what to do and where to go if a tornado strikes.
- Designate the location in your facility that is the safest. Place signs that designate it as a "safe place."
- Post instructions and maps throughout the facility with directions.
- Have the following critical items on hand in the safe place to assist in an emergency:
 - Blankets
 - Weather radios
 - First-Aid kit
 - Food and water
 - Mobile phones
 - Flashlights
 - Batteries
 - Emergency contact numbers
- Practice safety and evacuation drills regularly.
- Be prepared to evaluate and respond to any injuries.
- Evaluate and make changes as necessary.



When a Tornado Arrives

- ❑ Listen closely to weather reports.
- ❑ Do NOT go outside.
- ❑ Seek shelter in the designated safe room.
- ❑ Keep any drapes, blinds, or window shades closed to protect occupants from the possibility of breaking glass.

Once you are sure the storm has passed, use caution in all respects. Your structure could be damaged. Further, as you go outside, use extreme caution as live power lines may be down; and there may be a large amount of debris that could cause bodily injury.

When it is safe to do so, follow these steps:

After the Storm

- ❑ Treat those who have an injury or seek medical attention for them.
- ❑ Assess any damage. Take pictures if possible.
- ❑ Protect property from further damage using tarps or wood.
- ❑ Contact people who will be needed to secure the facility (building contractors, utility companies, etc.).
- ❑ Contact your insurance company.

Unfortunately, many people are killed every year due to tornadoes. By being proactive in your planning and ability to respond, you may help save the lives of people who look to their leaders to keep them safe and secure.