

Each year, people around the country are killed or seriously injured by tornados despite advance warning. The following preparedness information, combined with timely severe weather alerts, could help save lives or prevent injuries.

When a **Tornado Watch** is issued by the National Weather Service, tornados are possible in our area. Remain alert for approaching storms.

When a **Tornado Warning** is issued by the National Weather Service, it means that a tornado has been spotted or indicated by weather radar.



The City of Chicago has an early warning system to warn outdoor residents of impending danger. The system is designed to warn people of affected area in Chicago.

When activated, the sirens emit a loud wailing noise that goes up and down for three minutes.

Individuals who hear the sirens while outdoors should seek immediate indoor shelter inside a sturdy building away from windows and glass.

When the threat has passed, the siren will emit a steady wailing signal for three minutes.

The City conducts a 20-second test tone the first Tuesday of every month at 10:00 a.m. The test tone level is at a lower pitch volume than the actual alert sound.

To hear an example of the alert siren, visit

[www.alertchicago.com](http://www.alertchicago.com)

and select the "Tornado" icon.

## Steps You Can Take Before a Tornado Strikes:

**Build A Kit . . . Make A Plan . . .  
Get Information . . .**

### Build A Kit . . .

**For your home or other permanent shelter locations, prepare an Emergency Kit.**

- Flashlight and extra batteries.
- Portable battery-operated AM/FM radio with NOAA channel and extra batteries.
- First Aid kit and manual.
- Emergency food and water.
- Non-electric can opener.
- Essential medicines.
- Cash (in small denominations).
- Sturdy shoes.
- Important documents in a zip-lock plastic bag.
- Special items (baby formula, specialized dietary needs, extra mobility aids and pet food).

### Make A Plan . . .

Develop a plan for you and your family while at home, work, school, and on-the-go.

- Identify a pre-designated "safe place" to take shelter should a Tornado Warning be issued.
- Learn the protection position (on knees bent forward with fingers locked behind head).
- Establish a reunion location (should family members get separated).
- Practice drills with family frequently.
- Keep a list of important phone numbers (out-of-state contacts, doctors, pharmacist, and work numbers).

### Get Information . . .

To learn more about tornado risks and personal safety measures that can be taken, visit [www.alertchicago.com](http://www.alertchicago.com) or call 311 to request more information.

## Remember these emergency planning tips...

**Develop a severe weather action plan and conduct frequent drills of the plan.**

- Pre-designate a shelter location (basements offer the best protection).
- Learn the protection position.
- Identify an alternate means to notify people in the event of power failure (hard line phone, cell phone, and/or portable public address system).
- If necessary stay at work or school beyond regular hours until threatening weather has passed.
- Encourage your employer and school officials to develop an Emergency Action Plan.



**When a Tornado Warning is issued or sirens are sounded, individuals at home, school or work should:**

- Move to a pre-designated safe place such as a basement. If a basement is not available, move to an interior room or hallway on the lowest floor.
- Stay away from windows.
- Brace yourself under a piece of sturdy furniture, such as a workbench or heavy table.
- Get down in the protection position.
- Listen to the radio and/or television for further weather information and instructions from local officials.

**When a Tornado Warning is issued while on-the-go or driving . . .**

- Never remain in a vehicle.
- If in a vehicle, do not try to outrun a tornado
- Take immediate cover. Move to a sturdy nearby building.
- If no sturdy shelter is available, lie flat in a low area.
- Stay clear of any objects that may cause harm (trees, cars or other potential projectiles).
- Avoid taking cover in viaducts, bridges or bus shelters.
- Be aware of flying debris.
- Stay out of damaged houses and buildings.

You should also keep a **"Go Bag"** at work or in a vehicle.

Your Go Bag should include all the items recommended in the "Emergency Kit" in addition to the following.

- Bottled Water
- Whistle
- Socks
- Family Photo
- Paper, Pen and Tape
- Extra House and Car Keys
- Personal Hygiene Products (alcohol-based hand sanitizer, toothbrush, face cloth and feminine products)

While you can't prevent tornadoes from happening, you can be prepared for them. Protect the people who depend on you by being prepared and informed.

For more information on Tornado Preparedness and other emergencies, visit [www.alertchicago.com](http://www.alertchicago.com) for more information.



City of Chicago  
Richard M. Daley, Mayor



Office of Emergency Management  
and Communications



[www.alertchicago.com](http://www.alertchicago.com)



## A GUIDE TO TORNADO PREPAREDNESS

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Visit us on the web at:

[www.alertchicago.com](http://www.alertchicago.com)