

The Eye of the Storm

While tornadoes occur in many parts of the world, they are most frequently found in the United States, occasionally including New York City. Typically a tornado is spawned by powerful thunderstorms, but it can also accompany a tropical storm or hurricane as the storm moves onto land. Most tornado-related damages result from high wind speeds, wind-blown debris, and large hail. Tornadoes are not limited to one season; they can occur at any time of year.

Know Your Weather Words!

- **Tornado:** A rotating column of air extending from the ground to the base of a thunderstorm that is intense enough at the surface to cause damage. Wind speeds vary from 40 mph to 318 mph.
- **Tornado Watch:** Issued when conditions are favorable for the development of tornadoes in and close to the watch area. A tornado watch can be in effect for several hours.
- **Tornado Warning:** Issued when a tornado is indicated by radar or sighted by storm spotters.
- **Fujita Scale:** Used to measure a tornado's strength. The weakest tornado is an EF0, and the strongest is an EF5.

What to Do If a Tornado Is Likely

- If you are indoors, go to your basement or the lowest point in your residence. Move to a small interior room or hallway and get under a sturdy piece of furniture. Stay away from windows.
- If you are in a car, do not try to outrun a tornado. Get out of your car and seek shelter.
- If you are outdoors, head for shelter. If you can't find shelter, take cover in a ditch or similar area. Cover your head with your hands. Do not take cover under an overpass or bridge.
- Avoid buildings with wide roofs, such as auditoriums, cafeterias, large hallways, or shopping malls.



Let's get ready and stay safe if tornadoes occur in our area!

Quick activities to try at home:

- Do you remember a time when a tornado struck near New York City? Share with your child what you remember about that storm. Discuss as a family steps you would take to stay safe.
- Identify the safest areas in your home in case of a tornado. Remember, you should move to an interior room on the lowest floor, staying away from windows. Make sure everyone in your household knows what this area is.
- Review your household disaster plan. Remind everyone where your designated meeting places are and who your out-of-state contact is in case local phone lines are busy.

To Learn More:

Office of Emergency Management, http://www.nyc.gov/html/oem/html/hazards/weather_tornado.shtml

NYC Office of Emergency Management, www.NYC.gov/oem

OEM on Facebook, www.facebook.com/NYC/emergencymanagement

OEM on Twitter, @nycoem

Notify NYC, Register for emergency notifications by visiting NYC.gov/notifynyc, calling 311, or following @NotifyNYC on Twitter

American Red Cross, <http://www.redcross.org/prepare/disaster/tornado>

<http://www.nws.noaa.gov/om/reachout/kidspage.shtml>