

March/April
 2012

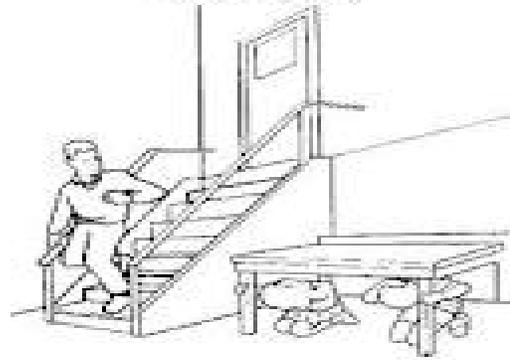
SAFETY TIP

Tornado Safety Tips

The tornado in Joplin last year and the multitude of tornadoes in the Midwest made Missourians especially aware of the deadly force and devastation that follows.

Given that tornadoes are unpredictable it is best to know how to prepare for tornadoes, what to do if a tornado is threatening, and what to do after a tornado.

Know the difference in **WATCH** and **WARNING**. A tornado watch is when the weather in your area makes it possible for tornadoes to appear. A warning is a tornado has been sighted or indicated by weather radar. Tornado warnings indicate imminent danger to life and property. Go immediately underground to a basement, storm cellar or an interior room (closet, hallway or bathroom). Communities have different ways of warning residents; know your area's warning system. With any storm listen to local news or weather radio to stay informed. Practice periodic tornado drills with the whole family.



Most tornadoes occur between 3 pm and 7 pm. Tornadoes have occurred in every state and can happen any time of the year.

The safest place to be is an underground shelter, basement or safe room. A **safe room** is a fortified room which is installed in a private residence or business. If no underground shelter or safe room is available, a small, windowless interior room or hallway on the lowest level of a sturdy building is the safest alternative.

Underground and **under a table** are the watchwords. Put as many walls as possible between you and the outside. Get under a sturdy table and use your arms to protect your head and neck. If available, put on a bicycle or motorcycle helmet to protect yourself from head injuries and put on sturdy shoes.

Here are some tornado danger signs:

- Dark, often greenish clouds—an occurrence caused by hail
- Wall cloud—an isolated lowering of the base of a thunderstorm
- Cloud of debris
- Large hail
- Funnel cloud—a visible rotating extension of the cloud base
- Roaring noise similar to a freight train.

Family plans should include what to do when you are home alone, where to meet if family members are separated. After a tornado stay indoors until it is safe to come out. Check for injuries and let your family know you are safe. Be very cautious in your setting.

Follow the links to find more information about Tornado Safety

[Owlie Skywarn's Coloring Book for Children](#)

[Tornado Safety Coloring Books](#)

[FEMA Tornado Safety Planning](#)

[NOAA Weather Education](#)

[Red Cross Preparedness Fast Facts](#)