

Know the difference between a watch and a warning

Tornado Watch—NWS meteorologists have determined that tornadoes are

possible in your area. You should monitor the weather closely. Stay on top of the latest information by monitoring NWS Norman at <http://www.srh.noaa.gov/oun/>. Go over your checklist, prepare your safe area, and be ready for the possibility of a tornado.

Tornado Warning—NWS meteorologists have determined that a tornado is

occurring, or likely to occur within minutes, in the specified area. Warnings

indicate imminent danger to life and property.

Severe Thunderstorm Watch—NWS meteorologists have determined that

severe thunderstorms are likely to occur in your area. Watch the sky and stay

tuned for NWS warnings.

Severe Thunderstorm Warning—NWS meteorologists have determined

that a severe thunderstorm is occurring or likely to occur. Warnings indicate

imminent danger to life and property.

NWS Norman

<http://www.srh.noaa.gov/oun/>

NWS Severe Weather Safety Page

<http://www.srh.noaa.gov/oun/?n=safety-severe>

Oklahoma Department of Emergency Management (OEM)

<http://www.ok.gov/oem/>

Ready.gov

<http://www.ready.gov/>

Red Cross Preparedness Resources

<http://www.redcross.org/prepare/disaster-safety-library>

Local Emergency Management

Agency

Phone Number

Creating resiliency throughout the Southwest Region of Oklahoma



Severe Weather Awareness

Know the Basics

Southwest Oklahoma Emergency Management

Tornado

Keeping informed about the weather is the best way to avoid being caught in a tornado or severe thunderstorm. Your local National Weather Service Forecast Office provides information about dangerous weather in your area, and you should keep a close eye on this information whenever storms threaten your area. A battery operated NOAA Weather Radio with a warning alarm feature should be a part of your information system!

When a severe storm or tornado threatens, remember these basic guidelines:

GET IN - get as far inside a strong building as you can, away from doors and windows

GET DOWN - get to the lowest floor

COVER UP - use whatever you can to protect yourself from flying or falling debris

- A reinforced underground storm shelter, storm cellar, enclosed basement or safe room are usually the safest places in a tornado. Underground shelters get you out of the way of flying and falling debris, which is a tornado's most lethal weapon.
- If you cannot get underground, remember the basic guidelines. Get as far inside the strongest building you can find. Stay away from doors, windows and other openings to the outside. Put as many walls between you and the outside as you can.
- Get as low as you can. Go to the lowest floor of the building you're in.
- Cover up to protect yourself from flying and falling debris. Use whatever you can find - pillows, blankets, sleeping bags, mattresses. Wearing a helmet or hardhat will help protect your head from debris.

Being outdoors, in a mobile home, or in a vehicle are all unsafe in a tornado or severe thunderstorm. Find stronger shelter before the storm arrives and remember to get in, get down and cover up.

Flooding

Floods are the most common and widespread of all natural disasters - except fire. Floods can be slow or fast rising and generally develop over a period of days.

Flash floods usually result from intense storms dropping large amounts of rain within a brief period. Flash floods occur with little or no warning and can reach full peak in only a few minutes.



During the flood:

- Stay informed. Turn on a battery-operated radio or television to get the latest emergency information.
- If advised to evacuate, do so immediately.
- Avoid walking through floodwater. Water only six inches deep can sweep you off your feet if it is moving swiftly.
- Do not drive into a flooded street. Cars can be swept away by two feet of moving water or there may be unseen damage to the road. If you come to a flooded area turn around and go another way. Most flood-related deaths are caused by people driving through water.

Watch out for fire hazards.

Lightning

What You Might Not Know About Lightning

All thunderstorms produce lightning and are dangerous.

Lightning often strikes outside the area of heavy rain and may strike as far as 10 miles from any rainfall.

Many lightning deaths occur ahead of storms or after storms have seemingly passed.

If you can hear thunder, you are in danger. Don't be fooled by blue skies. If you hear thunder, lightning is close enough to pose an immediate threat.

Avoid the Lightning Threat

Have a lightning safety plan. Know where you'll go for safety and how much time it will take to get there. Make sure your plan allows enough time to reach safety.

Postpone activities. Before going outdoors, check the forecast for thunderstorms. Consider postponing activities to avoid being caught in a dangerous situation.

Monitor the weather. Look for signs of a developing thunderstorm such as darkening skies, flashes of lightning or increasing wind.

Get to a safe place. If you hear thunder, even a distant rumble, immediately move to a safe place.