



If a Tornado Warning has been issued:

A purpose-built FEMA Complaint Community Safe Room or Individual Safe Room is preferred for shelter. If none are available or there is no time to reach such a saferoom, follow these safety rules:

- In general, get as low as you can. A basement below ground level or the lowest floor of a building offers the greatest safety. Put as many walls between yourself and the outside as possible. Avoid windows at all cost!
- Tornadoes could be obscured by rainfall or come at nighttime. Do not wait until you see or hear the tornado, it may be too late.
- Do not waste time opening or closing windows and doors. It will not protect the structure. You will only waste time and put yourself and others in greater risk. Use those valuable seconds to find a place of safety.
- In homes or public buildings: go to the basement or a small interior room, such as a closet, bathroom or an interior hall on the lowest level. Close all doors to the hallway for greater protection. If possible, get under something sturdy like a heavy table. Protect yourself from flying debris with pillows, heavy coats, blankets or quilts. Use bicycle or motorcycle helmets to protect your head.
- In mobile homes: leave well in advance of the approaching severe weather and go to a strong building. If there is no shelter nearby, get into the nearest ditch, low spot or underground culvert. Lie flat, covering your head with your hands for protection.
- In vehicles or outdoors: when tornadoes are possible, limit your outdoor plans or finish them early. Stay close to a sturdy shelter. If caught outside, find shelter in a ditch or remain in your vehicle and cover your head for protection. Do not take shelter under a highway overpass, where wind speeds can increase due to a tunneling effect. It is best to not put yourself or others in a situation where no sturdy shelter is available.
- Remember, stay away from doors, windows, outside walls and protect your head!

Tornado Safety Checklist:

- ☐ **Know your area's tornado risk. In the U.S., the Midwest and the Southeast, including Alabama, have a greater risk for tornadoes.**
- ☐ **Make a plan NOW. Identify where to go in the event a warning is issued and make sure your family or coworkers know what that plan is.**
- ☐ **Know the signs of a tornado, including a rotating, funnel-shaped cloud, an approaching cloud of debris, or a loud roar like a freight train.**
- ☐ **Sign up for your community's warning system. The Emergency Alert System (EAS) and NOAA Weather Radio also provide emergency alerts. If you live near an outdoor warning siren, then treat that siren as only 1 of at least 2 ways of receiving a warning. Any one method can fail.**
- ☐ **Pay attention to weather reports including forecasts, watches and warnings. Identify and practice going to a safe shelter such as a safe room built using FEMA criteria or a storm shelter built to ICC 500 standards. The next best protection is a small, interior, windowless room or basement on the lowest level of a sturdy building.**



- ☐ **Consider Overlapping Hazards such as Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19). Review the CDC's guidelines for going to a public disaster shelter during the COVID-19 pandemic.**
- ☐ **Plan for your pet. They are an important member of your family, so they need to be included in your family's emergency plan.**
- ☐ **Prepare for long-term stay at home or sheltering in place by gathering emergency supplies, cleaning supplies, non-perishable foods, water, medical supplies and medication.**