

June 21, 2021

Tornado Safety



Look and listen

The appearance of a funnel cloud in the sky is the most obvious sign of a tornado, but be on the lookout for other signs as well, according to Roger Edwards, a lead forecaster at NOAA's Storm Prediction Center. They include:

- Dark and often greenish clouds or sky
 - Appearance of wall clouds (also known as pedestal clouds)
 - Persistent and strong rotation in the cloud base
 - Hail and/or heavy rain, followed by a fast and intense wind shift or "dead calm"
- A roaring sound that doesn't fade after a few seconds
 - Whirling dust and debris near the ground and under the clouds

Seek shelter

If a tornado is nearby, quickly move to a sturdy building if one is available. If that's not an option, lie down in an area lower than the elevation of the road and cover your head with your hands. Never stay in a vehicle during a tornado or try to outrun it, experts caution – tornadoes often move in unpredictable paths.

In addition, you should know that bridges and overpasses are not good shelters. They can become wind tunnels for debris.

After the storm

Once the tornado passes, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention advises the following:

- Check for injuries. Don't move anyone who is seriously injured unless they are in immediate danger of further injury. Instead, seek medical assistance right away. Begin CPR (if trained) on anyone who has stopped breathing.
- Check apps and other sources for additional emergency weather information.
- Proceed with caution through damaged areas, and watch out for hazards. Wear proper personal protective equipment when handling debris.
- Cooperate with emergency personnel.