



Tornadoes

Tornadoes pose some risk to every state, but they are most frequently reported east of the Rocky Mountains during spring and summer months. Peak tornado season in the southern states is March through May; in the northern states, it is late spring through early summer. Although tornadoes are most likely to occur between 3 p.m. and 9 p.m., they can occur at any time. You will likely only have a short amount of time to make life or death decisions to prepare for a tornado, so advance planning is crucial.

How it Might Impact Your Utility Service

- Fill up clean containers, bathtubs, and sinks with water in case you lose service
- Have electric can openers, batteries for flashlights and radios, and back-up chargers for phones and other essential devices



ALERTS

Sign up for your community's warning system. The Emergency Alert System (EAS) and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Weather Radio also provide emergency alerts. If your community has sirens, then become familiar with the warning tone.

Tornado watch means that tornadoes are possible and you should remain alert. Watch the weather and be prepared to take shelter immediately if conditions worsen.

Tornado warning means that a tornado has been sighted or has been indicated by weather radar. Take shelter immediately.

BEFORE A TORNADO

- Remember the four steps of emergency planning:
 - R**eview your family preparedness plan.
 - E**stablish a communications plan.
 - A**ssemble a disaster supply kit.
 - D**evelop a household evacuation plan that includes your pets.
- Talk to your family so that everyone knows what to do.
- Have access to a NOAA weather radio.
- Know the signs of a tornado, including a rotating, funnel-shaped cloud; an approaching cloud of debris; or a loud roar—similar to a freight train. Tornadoes often coincide with other severe storms, such as thunderstorms, so be mindful of weather changes.

DURING A TORNADO

If you are at home:

- If you have a tornado safe room or engineered shelter, go there immediately.
- Listening to EAS, NOAA Weather Radio, and local authorities for updated information.

AFTER A TORNADO

- Keep listening to EAS, NOAA Weather Radio, and local authorities for updated information.
- Stay clear of fallen power lines or broken utility lines.
- If you smell gas, do not turn on any appliances or switches. This includes using phones, flashlights, or a cell phone.
- Do not enter damaged buildings until you are told that they are safe.
- Save your phone calls for emergencies. Phone systems are often down or busy after a disaster. Use text messaging or social media to communicate with family and friends.
- Be careful during clean-up. Wear thick-soled shoes, long pants, and work gloves.
- Take pictures of the damage—both to the house and its contents—for insurance purposes.