



FACT SHEET: TORNADOES

What is a Tornado?

A tornado, also known as a twister, is a powerful whirlwind shaped like a funnel pointing toward the ground. A tornado, large or small, can leave a wide path of destruction. This type of phenomenon can uproot trees, turn cars over and tear the roofs off houses.

Know What to Do:

At home:

- ◆ Stay away from windows and doors.
- ◆ Seek shelter in the basement, under a staircase, or in a small interior ground floor room such as a bathroom, closet or hallway.
- ◆ Avoid seeking shelter in large rooms that could collapse.

In the car:

- ◆ If you spot a tornado in the distance go to the nearest solid shelter.
- ◆ If the tornado is close, get out of your car and take cover in a low-lying area, such as a ditch.

If you are outdoors:

- ◆ Do not wait until you see the tornado to get inside.
- ◆ If you are caught outdoors, lay flat in a nearby ditch or depression and try to protect your head.
- ◆ Do not get under an overpass or bridge. You are safer in a low, flat location.
- ◆ Beware of flooding from downpours and be prepared to move.
- ◆ Watch out for flying debris.

In all cases

- ◆ Get as close to the ground as possible, protect your head and watch for flying debris.
- ◆ Do not chase tornadoes – they are unpredictable and can change course abruptly.
- ◆ A tornado is deceptive. It may appear to be standing still but is, in fact, moving toward you.

Warning signs include:

- ◆ Severe thunderstorms, with frequent thunder and lightning
- ◆ An extremely dark sky, sometimes appearing to have green, yellow or black clouds
- ◆ A rumbling sound or a whistling sound.
- ◆ A funnel cloud at the rear base of a thundercloud, often behind a curtain of heavy rain or hail.

Prepare Now

- ◆ When you are making your family emergency plan discuss these safety tips with your entire household to ensure everybody knows what to do in a tornado.
- ◆ Designate a safe room in your home like the basement, a storm cellar or interior room on the lowest floor with no windows for household members and pets to gather during a tornado.
- ◆ Remove dead or rotting trees and branches that could fall and cause injury or damage.

There is an average of 12 tornadoes a year in Ontario. Most tornadoes occur between the months of May and September. It is difficult to predict where a tornado will hit.



Sources:

Emergency Management Ontario Website (Government of Ontario):
<http://www.emergencymanagementontario.ca/english/beprepared/ontariohazards/Tornadoes/Tornadoes.html>
 Get Prepared Website (Government of Canada):
<http://www.getprepared.gc.ca/cnt/hzd/trnds-eng.aspx#a3>
 Red Cross Website: www.redcross.ca/prepare