

# TORNADO SAFETY TIPS



Tornadoes are violent by nature. They are capable of completely destroying well-made structures, uprooting trees and hurling objects through the air like deadly missiles.

In this area, tornados are not frequent, but they do happen. In 1997, an F5 tornado struck the town of Jarrell, 8 miles north of Georgetown. It devastated the area and cost 22 lives. So, while tornados don't strike here often, they do strike, and it's best to be prepared and to know what to do if a tornado is imminent.

Here are some of the things that people describe when they tell about a tornado experience:

1. A sickly greenish or greenish black color to the sky.
2. If there is a watch or warning posted, then hail should be considered as a real danger sign.
3. A strange quiet that occurs within or shortly after the thunderstorm.
4. Clouds moving by very fast, especially in a rotating pattern or converging toward one area of the sky.
5. A sound a little like a waterfall or rushing air at first, but turning into a roar as it comes closer. The sound of a tornado has been likened to that of both railroad trains and jets.
6. Debris dropping from the sky.
7. An obvious "funnel-shaped" cloud that is rotating, or debris such as branches or leaves being pulled upwards, even if no funnel cloud is visible.

## Know the Difference

**Tornado Watch** - Tornadoes are possible in and near the watch area.

**Tornado Warning** - A tornado has been sighted or indicated by weather radar. Tornado warnings indicate imminent danger to life and property. Take shelter immediately.

Is it likely that a tornado will strike your home or school? No. But being ready for the possibility will keep you safer!

## Tornado Safety Rules

1. Seek shelter under a sturdy table in the basement.
2. If no basement is available, go to a first floor, small interior room or hallway or a room on the opposite side from a tornado. Stay away from windows.



3. In schools, churches, and shopping centers, go to designated shelters away from outside walls, glass, and large rooms (malls, auditoriums). Get under a table or counter or in a restroom or small storeroom. **DO NOT GO TO YOUR PARKED CAR**

4. In a vehicle, drive away at a right angle to the storm movement. If it is not possible to get away from the tornado, try to find a building to go to. There is a controversy over staying in a car versus getting in a ditch during a tornado. To read about the controversy, visit the website [http://www.weather.com/blog/weather/8\\_19417.html](http://www.weather.com/blog/weather/8_19417.html) Contrary to popular opinion, it is NOT safe to take shelter under a bridge or overpass. <http://www.crh.noaa.gov/ddc/?n=over>

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