

TORNADO BEST PRACTICES

While New Jersey is not Tornado Alley, we do get tornados occasionally. Infrequency can lead to complacency. Let's review some best practices when dealing with tornados.

Be Prepared

Start protecting yourself and your family now, before the next storm. In the immediate aftermath of a tornado, local emergency services will be stressed. You should have an emergency kit that will enable you to take care of yourself for at least a couple of hours and up to a day or two. The contents of the kit should include:

- Battery-operated radio with spare batteries or internet-enabled device to listen to the latest information.
- Water, non-perishable food, and medications for family members and pets.
- Important contact information and medical records.

Talk to children about tornado watches and warnings, what county they live in (warnings are typically issued by county), and what constitutes a safe shelter.

Stay Aware of Weather Conditions

To protect yourself and your family from harm during a tornado, pay close attention to changing weather conditions in your area. If you know thunderstorms are expected, stay tuned to local radio and TV stations or an NOAA weather radio for further weather information.

You can also set your phone to receive weather warnings and watches.

- **Tornado Warning** means that either a tornado has been spotted or radar has picked one up.
- **Tornado Watch** would mean there is a good chance that a tornado will form in an affected area.

Know Where to Take Shelter

Falling and flying debris cause most deaths and injuries during a tornado. Talk to your family about options where to take shelter in or around your home. Although there is no completely safe place during a tornado, some locations are much safer than others.

- Go to the basement or an inside room without windows on the lowest floor (bathroom, closet, center hallway).
- If possible, avoid sheltering in a room with windows.
- For added protection, get under something sturdy (a heavy table or workbench). Cover your body with a blanket, sleeping bag, or mattress. Protect your head with anything available.
- Do not stay in a mobile home.

If you are outside, find a nearby building, preferably with a basement. If you are in a car, do not try to outrun a tornado but instead find the nearest sturdy building.

For more information, visit the [CDC Tornadoes](https://www.cdc.gov/tornadoes/).