**Tornadoes**

**What is a Tornado?**

A tornado is a violent windstorm characterized by a twisting, funnel-shaped cloud. It is spawned by a thunderstorm and produced when cool air overrides a layer of warm air, forcing the warm air to rise rapidly.

* A **tornado watch** is issued by the National Weather Service when tornadoes are possible in the area. This is the time to remind family members where the safest places within your home are located, and listen to the radio or television for further developments.
* A **tornado warning** is issued when a tornado has been sighted or indicated by weather radar. If a tornado warning is issued for your area and the sky becomes threatening, move to your pre-designated place of safety.

**Fujita-Pearson Tornado Scale**

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| **Fujita-Pearson Tornado Scale**             [Interactive Twister](http://whyfiles.org/013tornado/3.html) | | |
| F-0 | 40-72 mph | Chimney Damage, Tree Branches Broken |
| F-1 | 73-112 mph | Mobile homes pushed off foundation or overturned |
| F-2 | 113-157 mph | Considerable damage, mobile homes demolished, trees uprooted |
| F-3 | 158-205 mph | Roofs and walls torn down, trains overturned, cars thrown |
| F-4 | 207-260 mph | Well-constructed walls leveled |
| F-5 | 261-318 mph | Homes lifted off foundation and carried considerable distances, Autos thrown as far as 100 meters |

**Precautions**

**Before a Tornado Strikes**

* Know the terms used to describe tornado threats; tornado watch and tornado warning.
* If you see any revolving, funnel shaped clouds, report them immediately by telephone to 911.
* Know the locations of designated shelter areas in public facilities, such as schools and public buildings.
* Have emergency supplies on hand during tornado season.
* Be sure everyone in your household knows in advance where to go and what to do in case of a tornado warning.
* Make an inventory of your household furnishings and other possessions. Supplement the written inventory with photographs. Keep inventories and photos in a safe deposit box or some other safe place away from the premises.
* Whenever severe thunderstorms threaten your area, listen to radio and television newscasts for the latest information and instructions.

**During a Tornado**

* When a tornado has been sighted, stay away from windows, doors and outside walls. Protect your head from falling objects or flying debris.Take cover immediately, wherever you are.
* Do not attempt to flee from a tornado in a car or other vehicle. They are no match for the swift, erratic movement of these storms.

**After a Tornado**

* Use great caution when entering a building damaged from high winds. When entering or cleaning a tornado-damaged building, be sure that walls, ceiling and roof are in place and that the structure rests firmly on the foundation.
* Look out for broken glass and downed power lines.
* Check for injuries. Do not attempt to move seriously injured persons unless they are in immediate danger of further injury. Call for help immediately.

The National Weather Service is responsible for issuing severe weather watches, warnings and advisories to alert the public.

For more information, please visit: [www.nws.noaa.gov/severeweather/index.shtml](http://www.nws.noaa.gov/severeweather/index.shtml) and [www.weathersafety.ohio.gov](http://www.weathersafety.ohio.gov)