

How to prepare for a tornado: 5 tips to stay safe in the storm.



Tornadoes may have a specific season (March through June), but they can happen at any time, in any town. When they do, these violent, vertical funnels of rapidly spinning air can have intense winds and immediate effects. In fact, according to National Geographic, a tornado can clear a pathway one mile wide and 50 miles long, with winds up to 250 miles per hour.

To help prepare your home or business for a tornado, discover five tips to stay safe in the storm:

1. **Know what to watch for.** When there's a *tornado watch*, it means it's possible. However, a *tornado warning* means it's already occurring (or will occur soon). Look for signs of the storm, like a darkening sky (especially if it's green or orange), whirling debris or a rumble that sounds like continuous thunder.
2. **Designate a safe space.** When there's a tornado warning, where will you take cover? Every home and business should have an area for shelter, and everyone should know where it is. Of course, experts recommend a basement. But if you don't have one, the next best option is a room with no windows on the lowest level. (For those who live or work in high-rise buildings, a hallway in the center of the building is safest. Those in a mobile home should choose a sturdy building nearby.)
3. **Stash emergency items in it.** Once you know where to go, think about what you'll need. If you're banished to the basement for hours, or even days, you'll want bottled water, non-perishable food, a flashlight and phone charger. Take it one step further and include a whistle

to signal for help, dust masks, moist towelettes, garbage bags, sleeping bags and a change of clothing.

4. **Fill your first-aid kit.** In case of injury or emergency, make sure you stock up on supplies. And teach your family/employees how to use them. For your convenience, we've compiled a list of items you should always have access to.
5. **Invest in a fire- and waterproof safe.** This will help you avoid damage to essential documents. Keep your most important information inside of it, like social security cards, birth certificates, certificates of ownership, insurance policies, wills and an inventory of your home/business.

When you know a tornado is near, head to your safe space. Get away from any windows and, if possible, get under a sturdy piece of furniture. Then, use your arms to protect your head and neck, and encourage anyone with you to do the same.

After the storm has cleared, check for damage. Frankenmuth Insurance policyholders can report a claim 24 hours a day, seven days a week.