

Severe Weather Safety



Tornadoes are nature's most violent storms. With little or no warning, powerful thunderstorms can produce tornadoes that can cause extensive damage in a short time. The strong rotating winds can easily destroy large buildings, turn small, normally harmless items into deadly missiles, and hurl people, animals, and even heavy machinery hundreds of yards. Flying debris carried along by the funnel causes most injuries and deaths from tornadoes.

Since 1950 all counties in Illinois have experienced tornadoes. Tornadoes can occur any time of the year in the state, but the prime months are March through June. Illinois has averaged 31 tornadoes per year since 1950, but there have been as many as 107 in one year (1974). Fifty percent of all tornadoes occur between three and seven p.m., but they can strike any time of day. Only about 15% of all tornadoes strike during the night.

It is important to be prepared for tornadoes before they strike. The following guideline will help you prepare for a tornado. First, know the terms used to describe tornado threats:

Tornado Watch - Tornadoes are possible – stay tuned to radio and TV reports.

Tornado Warning - A Tornado has been sighted – take shelter immediately.

Severe Thunderstorm Watch - Severe thunderstorms are possible.

Severe Thunderstorm Warning - Severe thunderstorms are occurring in the warning areas.

Second, determine safe places to seek shelter, such as a basement/storm cellar, or an interior room on the lowest floor. Make sure everyone in the family knows where to go. Remember to have emergency supplies on hand, such as extra food, blankets, flashlights, batteries, and battery-operated radio. Third, Insure property and possessions. Keep an inventory of your possessions.

What to do during a tornado watch

- Listen to a radio or television broadcasts for the latest information.
- Be alert for approaching storms. Be prepared to take shelter if threatening weather approaches.

What to do during a tornado

- When a tornado has been sighted, go to the basement immediately. If there is no basement, go to an interior part of the building on the lowest level. Stay away from windows, doors and outside walls.
- Vehicles, trailers, and mobile homes will not provide adequate shelter. If at all possible, get out immediately and find shelter in a substantial structure.
- If you are caught outdoors and there is no shelter nearby, seek a low-lying area and shield your head with your hands. Stay in your shelter until the danger has passed.

If a tornado is spotted in the area and is considered a threat to the residents of Lake Zurich, the Village will activate the outdoor emergency warning sirens. These sirens will sound a warning for three minutes and then stop.