Tornado Tip Sheet

Tornadoes have the potential to create significant property damage and business interruption. While there is new technology in forecasting, yielding increased warning times, tornadoes can still strike without much warning, so it is critical to prepare in advance and create plans for mitigating damage. The following are some general suggested tips and actions to consider taking, before, during, and after a tornado strikes.

Some Tips and Actions to Take Before Tornado Season:

- Develop an emergency Response Team as part of the Plant Emergency Organization.
- Prepare, or locate, and maintain a scaled plan or diagram of the facility which clearly shows the location of all fire protection and other emergency equipment.
- Pre-qualify and pre-commit as many certified repair and service contractors as possible, including both local and national firms.
- Understand your energy needs and make arrangements for backup utilities and fuel sources where possible. Anticipate loss of electrical power and other utilities and consider emergency generators, alternative fuels, etc.
- Review the structural integrity of buildings and structures, including rotted wood, rusted metal, physical damage, loose/missing fasteners, etc. Replace or repair damaged components.
- Review and evaluate the wind resistance of each structure and implement improvements.
- Inspect roof coverings, perimeter flashings, gutters, drains, ventilators, and other roof-mounted equipment.
- Check for weak door and windows latches and hardware.
- Identify and consider removing any large trees which may fall and damage buildings or structures.

Some Tips and Actions to Take During a Tornado Warning

- Establish emergency communication methods.
- Watch for tornado danger signs:
  - Dark, often greenish clouds – a phenomenon caused by hail
  - Wall cloud – an isolated lowering of the base of a thunderstorm
  - Cloud of debris
  - Large hail
  - Funnel cloud – a visible rotating extension of the cloud base
  - Roaring noise
- Turn off non-essential lighting, machinery and equipment. Anticipate power outages and surges.
- Back up important computer data and records.
- If you do not have a safe room or a tornado shelter, identify the safest are of your home or business such as a basement or a small interior room without windows.
- Do not open windows. This may actually make things worse by giving wind and rain a greater chance of getting inside.
- Don’t try to ride out a tornado in a manufactured home. Even manufactured homes with tie-downs overturn in these storms because they have light frames and offer windows a large surface area to push against. Their exteriors are also vulnerable to high windows and wind-borne debris.
- If driving when a tornado is imminent, buckle your seat belt and try to drive to the closest sturdy shelter.
- If debris starts flying while you are driving, pull over and park. Stay in the car with the seat belt on. Put your head down below the windows, covering with your hands and a blanket if possible.

Some Tips and Actions to Take After a Tornado

- Continue listening to local news or NOAA Weather Radio for updated information and further instructions.
- Damage should be surveyed and, as soon as possible, notification of the fire protection impairments to the local fire department and/or police departments.
- Report damage to insurance companies as soon as possible.
- Survey for safety hazards such as downed electrical wires, leaking gas or flammable liquids, damage to underground piping, etc. Notify the appropriate utilities as soon as possible.
- Take measures to temporarily repair areas in order to prevent further damage.

For more information, please visit Insurance Institute for Business & Home Safety at www.disastersafety.org or the American Red Cross at www.redcross.org/prepare/disaster/tornado.