

February 23, 2009

TO: Vice Presidents, Deans, Directors, and Heads of Schools, Divisions, Departments and Offices

FR: Carol A. Shelby, Senior Director

RE: Severe Weather-Tornadoes & Thunderstorms

Purdue University is located in a region of the United States that is susceptible to dangerous weather events such as severe thunderstorms and tornadoes. On average, there are 23 tornadoes reported in Indiana annually. Faculty, staff, and students can better prepare themselves to respond to severe weather by considering the following:

- I. Preparation
  - a. Locate an accessible basement or corridor in your building.
  - b. Identify sheltered areas away from glass & exterior walls.
  - c. Stay informed through local media sources when severe weather is predicted or expected.
  - d. Obtain a National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) weather radio with a warning alarm tone. Check the batteries monthly.
  - e. Keep a flashlight in your office/work area, and check the batteries once per month.
  - f. Contact Tom Cooper, Safety and Security, for more information on Tornadoes.
- II. Response
  - a. A "Tornado Warning" issued by the National Weather Service means a tornado has been sighted and you must seek shelter immediately. When an exterior siren sounds or a NOAA weather radio sounds a warning alarm tone, you must seek shelter immediately (Exterior sirens will sound for three minutes).
    - i. Proceed to the lowest floor of any building.
    - ii. Position yourself in an interior corridor away from windows or glass.
  - b. A "Tornado Warning" can be considered ALL CLEAR when the National Weather Service states that the "Tornado Warning" has expired. Local radio and television can be used as a source for the expiration of the "Tornado Warning" time period.
  - c. Always remain in a place of shelter until you receive an all-clear message or until you are sure the tornado has passed.
  - d. Dial 911 (Purdue Dispatch) to report any *emergency conditions* resulting from the storm.
  - e. Stay out of damaged buildings.
  - f. Avoid buildings and areas with broken utility lines (i.e., gas, electric, water).
- III. Additional Information
  - a. For detailed actions concerning Tornado Emergencies, see the web at [http://www.purdue.edu/physicalfacilities/pdf/tornado\\_procedures.pdf](http://www.purdue.edu/physicalfacilities/pdf/tornado_procedures.pdf)
  - b. See Executive Memorandum No. C-35 for University policies related to Adverse Weather.
  - c. The reverse side of this memo should be conspicuously posted.
  - d. Contact Ron Wright at 494-0446 for assistance in developing emergency response procedures in your area.

# TORNADO PROCEDURES

Purdue University  
West Lafayette Campus

## TORNADO WATCH

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A "Tornado Watch" is issued when atmospheric conditions are favorable for the formation of tornadoes in a given area. Under these conditions, stay informed by listening to radio or television.

## A TORNADO WARNING

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A "Tornado Warning" indicates that a tornado has been sighted and poses a definite threat to a given area. Take cover as soon as possible.

## WARNING SIGNALS

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- A NOAA weather alert radio will sound the appropriate alert as required by the National Weather Service.
- Outdoor sirens will sound for a period in excess of three minutes. When this occurs, seek shelter, tune into local radio and TV stations to determine the nature of the emergency.
- A voice message will be broadcast over WBAA, Boiler TV, and other local radio and television stations.

The **ALL CLEAR** signal is announced by radio and television stations.

## WHEN TAKING SHELTER

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Proceed to the basement of any building that has a basement or subwalk. Position yourself in an interior corridor of the area away from glass. Be prepared to kneel facing a wall and cover your head.

## SEVERE THUNDERSTORMS

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The National Weather Service issues severe thunderstorm watches and warnings. Remember that tornadoes are spawned from severe thunderstorms, so monitor NOAA weather alerts.

## SIREN TESTING

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The exterior warning sirens are tested at 11:00 a.m. on the first Saturday of every month except during periods of adverse weather conditions.