

To: Members of the West Lafayette campus community

From: Jason Wasson, Vice President for Physical Facilities and Chief Public Safety Officer

Date: March 1, 2025

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. Faculty, staff, and students must prepare themselves to respond to severe weather by reviewing [building emergency plans](#) to locate the building “shelter in place” location and consider the following in any building:

**I. Preparation – Shelter in place location and weather warnings**

- a. Locate the accessible basement or lowest interior corridor in the building.
- b. Identify a shelter in place location away from glass and exterior walls, if possible.
- c. Stay informed through local media sources when severe weather is expected.
- d. Obtain a National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) weather application or radio.
- e. Keep a working flashlight in your office or residential area.

**II. Response – Go indoors and shelter in place**

- a. A "Tornado Warning" issued by the National Weather Service means atmospheric conditions make a tornado likely or a tornado has been sighted and *you must seek shelter immediately*. When the All-Hazards Outdoor Warning Sirens sound (typically for three minutes) or NOAA sounds a warning alarm tone on the weather application or radio, *you must seek shelter immediately*.
  - i. Proceed to the shelter in place location or the lowest level of any building, away from glass and exterior walls, if possible.
- b. A Tornado Warning can be considered “all clear” when NOAA states that the Tornado Warning has expired. NOAA weather applications and local radio and television stations 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 the warning has expired.*
- d. Dial 911 (Purdue Public Safety Dispatch) to report any *life-threatening emergency conditions* resulting from the storm.
- e. Stay out of damaged buildings and avoid broken utility lines (i.e., gas, electric, water).

Please note weather warning and response definitions on page 2.

### III. Weather Warning and Response Definitions

#### **Weather Warning Signals**

- A NOAA weather alert application or radio will sound the appropriate alert.
- All-Hazards Outdoor Emergency Warning Sirens will sound for approximately three minutes.
- Local television or radio stations will provide an emergency alert.
- A PurdueALERT emergency notification\* will typically be sent for a tornado warning via some or all of the following emergency notification layers: text message, desktop popup alert, digital signs, classroom alert beacons, mass email, and Boiler TV emergency alert advising of the tornado warning and the expiration time.

#### **Shelter in Place**

Proceed to the lowest level of the building including a basement or sub walk. Position yourself in an interior corridor of the area away from glass and exterior walls, if possible. Be prepared to kneel facing a wall and cover your head. Stay sheltered until the warning expires.

#### **Severe Thunderstorm Watches and Warnings**

The National Weather Service or NOAA issues “severe thunderstorm” watches and warnings. Tornadoes arise from severe thunderstorms. Stay informed via one or more of the above weather warning signals for thunderstorm watches and warnings to prepare for the potential of more severe weather.

#### **Tornado Watch**

The National Weather Service or NOAA issues a “Tornado Watch” when local atmospheric conditions are favorable for the formation of tornadoes. During a tornado watch, stay informed via one or more of the weather warning signals noted above.

#### **Tornado Warning**

The National Weather Service or NOAA issues a "Tornado Warning" when atmospheric conditions make a tornado likely or a tornado has been sighted and *you must seek shelter immediately*. Monitor the expiration of the tornado warning, and remained sheltered until the tornado warning expires.

#### **Outdoor All-Hazards Emergency Warning Siren Testing**

The outdoor All-Hazards Emergency Warning Sirens are tested by Tippecanoe County at 11 a.m. on the first Saturday of every month except during periods of adverse weather conditions. In addition, the seven sirens located on campus are tested once each semester.

*\*Sign up for PurdueALERT emergency notifications [here](#). For additional information, see the [Emergency Preparedness website](#).*