

To: Vice Presidents, Deans, Directors, and Heads of Schools, Divisions, Departments and Offices
From: Carol A. Shelby, Senior Director
Date: February 19, 2019
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 25 tornadoes reported in Indiana annually. Faculty, staff, and students must prepare themselves to respond to severe weather by considering the following:

I. Preparation – locate the shelter

- a. Locate an accessible basement or interior corridor in your building.
- b. Identify sheltered areas 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 radio with a warning alarm tone. Check the batteries monthly.
- e. Keep a flashlight in your office/work area, and check the batteries monthly.

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 or a NOAA weather radio sounds a warning alarm tone, *you must seek shelter immediately* (All Hazards Outdoor Warning Sirens will sound for three minutes). It is recommended that you periodically review your Building Emergency Plan and know your shelter location for a Tornado Warning.
 - i. Proceed to that location or the lowest of any building, as time permits.
 - 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, the warning has expired, or until you are sure the tornado has passed.*
- d. Dial 911 (Purdue Public Safety Dispatch) to report any *life threatening 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).

Terminology

Severe Thunderstorm

The National Weather Service issues severe thunderstorm watches and warnings. Tornadoes are spawned from severe thunderstorms so monitor NOAA weather alerts for thunderstorm watches and warnings for advance notice of severe weather.

Tornado Watch

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

Tornado Warning

A "Tornado Warning" indicates that a tornado has been sighted or radar has indicated intense low level rotation in the presence of atmospheric conditions conducive to tornado development and it poses a definite threat to an area. Go indoors and shelter in place immediately.

Warning Signals

- A NOAA weather alert radio will sound the appropriate alert.
- Outdoor All Hazards Emergency Warning Sirens will sound for approximately three minutes.
- Consult local weather internet sites or listen to local radio (WBAA), Boiler TV or other local radio or television stations to determine the nature of the emergency.
- A Purdue ALERT will usually be sent via some or all of these notification layers: text message, Twitter text, Desktop Popup Alert, certain digital signs, classroom alert beacons, 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 away from windows and exterior doors; if possible go to the basement of any building that has a basement or sub walk. Position yourself in an interior corridor of the area away from glass. Be prepared to kneel facing a wall and cover your head. Stay sheltered until the 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.

For additional information, including Building Emergency Plans, see www.purdue.edu/emergency_preparedness.