



## GOALS

This safety session teaches employees to:

- Identify tornado hazards and warning signs.
- Take effective action to stay safe when a tornado strikes.

### Applicable Regulations: 29 CFR 1910.38



#### 1. What are tornadoes, and why are they so dangerous?

- Tornadoes start as strong thunderstorms and end as nature's most violent, damaging storms.
- Tornadoes appear as the familiar funnel-shaped black cloud with whirling winds that can reach 300 miles per hour.
- Damage in the tornado's wake can extend to over 1 mile wide and 50 miles long.
- There is some tornado risk during the year in every state.
- Tornadoes often develop rapidly so that little advance warning is possible in some cases.
- Tornado "watches" are declared when the potential for a tornado exists, and tornado "warnings" are declared when a tornado has been spotted in your area.

#### 2. What are the warning signs of an approaching tornado?

- Be alert to changing weather conditions, and look for approaching storms.
- When weather conditions appear threatening, check radio or television for tornado alerts.
- Look for the following danger signs: dark, often greenish sky; large hail; a large, dark, low-lying cloud, particularly if rotating; and a loud roar, similar to a moving freight train.
- If you see approaching storms or danger signs, be prepared to take shelter immediately.

#### 3. What can you do to prepare before a tornado strikes?

- In a tornado warning, seek shelter immediately in a building or other solid structure. — Most injuries associated with high winds are from flying debris.
- Stay inside, close windows, and go to a designated shelter area such as a safe room, basement, storm cellar, or the lowest building level.
- If there is no basement, go to the center of an interior room on the lowest level (for example, a closet or hallway) away from corners, windows, doors, and outside walls.
- Put as many walls as possible between you and the outside.
- Get under a sturdy table and use your arms to protect your head and neck.
- In a high-rise building, go to a small interior room or hallway on the lowest floor possible.
- If you are in a mobile home, get out immediately and go to a sturdy, nearby building.

#### 4. What should you do if you are caught outside?

- Being in a vehicle during a tornado is not safe. If possible, drive to the nearest sturdy shelter.



- Never try to outrun a tornado in urban or congested areas in a vehicle. Instead, leave the vehicle, and seek safe shelter.
- If you cannot make it to a safe shelter, pull over and park, put your seat belt on, put your head below the windows, and cover your head with your hands and a blanket, coat, or a cushion, if possible.
- If you can safely get lower than the level of the roadway (like a ditch or ravine), leave your car and lie in that area, covering your head with your hands.

## 5. What should you do if you are caught outside?

- Being outside during a tornado is very dangerous. The safest course of action is always to seek a sturdy shelter. Sheds and other outbuildings are not safe.
- If you cannot make it to a safe shelter, lie flat and facedown on low ground, protecting the back of your head with your arms.
- Get as far away from trees and cars as you can, and watch out for flying debris.
- Do not get under an overpass or bridge. You are safer in a low, flat location.

## 6. What steps should you take to protect against hazards after a tornado?

- Check for injuries, but do not attempt to move seriously injured people unless they are in immediate danger of further injury.
- Wear sturdy shoes or boots, long sleeves, and gloves when handling or walking on or near debris, and be aware of hazards from exposed nails and broken glass.
- If you suspect any damage to your home, shut off electrical power, natural gas, and propane to avoid electrocution, fire, or explosions.
- Do not touch downed power lines or objects in contact with downed lines.
- Report electrical hazards or gas leaks to the police and the utility company.
- Never use generators, pressure washers, grills, camp stoves, or other gasoline-, propane-, natural gas-, or charcoal-burning devices inside your home or garage.
- Be careful when cleaning up debris, watch for hazards, and wear appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE), just as you would against job hazards.



### DISCUSSION POINTS:

Review workplace emergency procedures to be followed in the event of a tornado during working hours. Recommend that employees develop family tornado plans, designate safe shelters within their homes, and conduct drills with the whole family.



### CONCLUSION:

- Tornadoes are deadly—don't take chances!
- Tornadoes can occur with little or no warning and can be deadly. Knowing how to respond at a moment's notice can help you and your family stay safe if a tornado occurs in your area.



### TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE:

Have your employees take the Tornado Safety quiz. By testing their knowledge, you can judge their ability to recognize tornado risks and emergency actions and whether they need to re-view this important topic again soon.