

# When the Wind Blows

According to the Florida Division of Emergency Management, Florida is one of the most tornado-prone states, with only Texas, Kansas and Oklahoma reporting more tornadoes on average per year. The strongest tornadoes usually occur in late February and early March. Tornadoes can be one mile wide and stay on the ground for 50 miles. They cause an average of 70 fatalities and 1,500 injuries in the U.S. each year. In Florida, tornadoes might be "rain wrapped," meaning you cannot see them due to weather conditions.

## Learn these tornado danger signs:

- An approaching cloud of debris can mark the location of a tornado even if its funnel is not visible.
- Before a tornado hits, the wind may die down and the air may become very still.
- Tornadoes generally occur near the trailing edge of a thunderstorm. It is not uncommon to see clear, sunlit skies behind a tornado.

## What to do before a tornado:

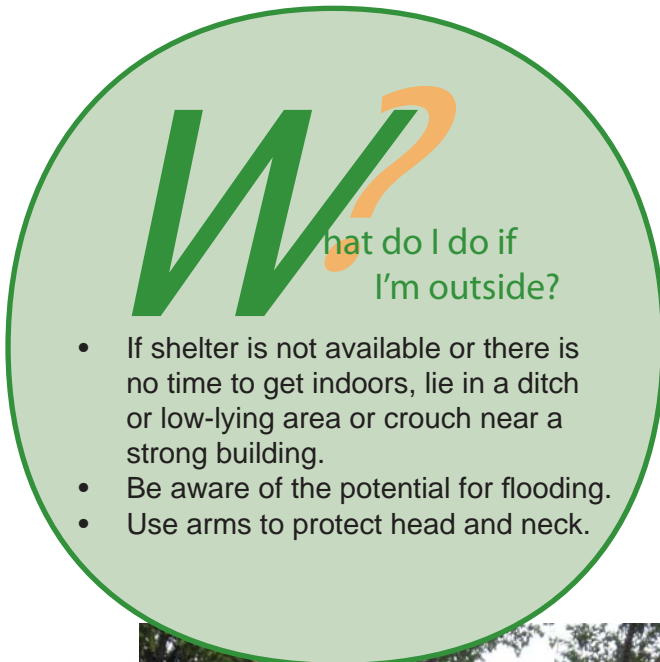
- Understand "Watch" and "Warning" terms.
- Purchase NOAA Weather Radio.

## What to do during a tornado:

- Go to interior or basement room on lower level.
- In a large building (school, hospital, etc.) go to pre-designated shelter area or interior hall on lowest level.
- Get under sturdy desk or furniture if possible, use arms and hands to protect head.
- In a mobile home, RV or trailer, get out immediately and go to a permanent structure. If none is available seek shelter in a ditch or culvert. Do not attempt to out-drive a tornado.
- Keep a disaster kit handy.

## What to do after a tornado:

- Call 9-1-1 to report damage and injuries.
- Be aware of debris and downed power lines.
- Monitor radio and TV for current information.
- Check family for injuries; move injured only if necessary. Check on neighbors when it is safe to do so.



What do I do if I'm outside?

- If shelter is not available or there is no time to get indoors, lie in a ditch or low-lying area or crouch near a strong building.
- Be aware of the potential for flooding.
- Use arms to protect head and neck.

Tornado/Wind

Photos: Damage to a home in Pace from a downed tree caused by straight line winds on June 29, 2008.

