

READY TOGETHER FOUNDATION
COMMUNITY PREPAREDNESS RESOURCE LIBRARY

RTF-111

Severe Storm Preparedness Guide

A Practical Guide to Protecting Your Family Before, During, and After
Severe Storms

Building Resilient Communities Together

Storms Can Develop Quickly

Severe storms can bring heavy rain, strong winds, hail, lightning, flash flooding, and tornadoes. They can disrupt power, damage homes, block roads, and create dangerous conditions within minutes.

Preparing before storm season helps your family stay safe and respond with confidence.

Preparedness begins before the clouds appear.

Why Severe Storm Preparedness Matters

Preparing for severe storms helps your family:

- Respond quickly to changing weather conditions.
- Reduce the risk of injury.
- Protect your home and belongings.
- Stay informed during emergencies.
- Recover more quickly after the storm.

Preparation saves valuable time when every minute counts.

Before a Severe Storm

Take these important steps:

- ☐ Monitor weather forecasts regularly.
- ☐ Sign up for local emergency alerts.
- ☐ Prepare your emergency kit.
- ☐ Charge mobile phones and portable battery packs.
- ☐ Secure outdoor furniture and loose objects.
- ☐ Trim weak tree branches when appropriate.
- ☐ Review your family communication plan.
- ☐ Identify the safest room in your home.

Prepared families prepare before storm season begins.

Know the Difference

Understanding weather alerts helps you respond appropriately.

Storm Watch

Conditions are favorable for severe weather.

Stay informed and be prepared to act.

Storm Warning

Severe weather is occurring or expected soon.

Take protective action immediately.

During a Severe Storm

If you are indoors:

- ☐ Stay inside.
- ☐ Keep away from windows and glass doors.
- ☐ Move to an interior room on the lowest level if appropriate.
- ☐ Monitor official weather updates.
- ☐ Keep your emergency kit nearby.
- ☐ Avoid using corded electrical appliances during lightning.

Your safety comes first.

Lightning Safety

When thunder roars, go indoors.

Remember:

- ☐ Seek shelter immediately.
- ☐ Stay away from windows.
- ☐ Avoid plumbing and electrical equipment if practical.
- ☐ Wait at least 30 minutes after the last thunder before returning outside.

Lightning can strike several miles from a storm.

If You Are Outdoors

If you cannot reach a building:

- ☐ Avoid open fields.
- ☐ Stay away from isolated trees.
- ☐ Leave bodies of water immediately.
- ☐ Avoid metal fences and poles.
- ☐ Seek substantial shelter as soon as possible.

Never shelter under a single tree during lightning.

If You Are Driving

- ☐ Reduce your speed.
- ☐ Turn on your headlights.
- ☐ Avoid flooded roads.
- ☐ Pull over safely if visibility becomes poor.
- ☐ Stay inside your vehicle if conditions become dangerous.

Never drive through flooded roadways.

After the Storm

Once conditions improve:

- ☐ Check for injuries.
- ☐ Watch for downed power lines.
- ☐ Inspect your home for damage.
- ☐ Avoid standing water near electrical hazards.
- ☐ Photograph damage if needed for insurance.
- ☐ Continue monitoring official information.

Only begin cleanup when it is safe.

Protecting Children

Help children by:

- ☐ Explaining storms in simple language.
- ☐ Practicing where to go during severe weather.
- ☐ Keeping comfort items in your emergency kit.
- ☐ Reassuring them after the storm.

Prepared children feel more confident during emergencies.

Caring for Pets

Include your pets in your storm plan.

- ☐ Bring pets indoors before the storm arrives.
- ☐ Prepare food and water.
- ☐ Keep medications available.
- ☐ Have carriers or leashes ready.
- ☐ Ensure identification tags are current.

Never leave pets outside during severe weather.

Ready Together Action

Complete these three steps this week:

- ☐ Identify the safest room in your home.
- ☐ Secure outdoor items that could become airborne.
- ☐ Practice your family storm safety plan.

Prepared families prepare before storms arrive.

Review Your Storm Preparedness

Review your storm plan:

- ☐ Before storm season.
- ☐ After moving to a new home.
- ☐ Every six months.

- ☐ After changes in your household.

Preparedness is an ongoing commitment.

About Ready Together Foundation

Ready Together Foundation is dedicated to building resilient communities through emergency preparedness, emergency relief and response, youth engagement, and outreach to vulnerable populations.

Our work focuses on:

- Community Emergency Preparedness
- Emergency Relief & Response
- Youth Preparedness & Leadership
- Vulnerable Population Outreach

Together, we are building stronger, safer, and more resilient communities.

Ready Together Foundation

Building Resilient Communities Together

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Preparedness is a journey, not a one-time event. Every small step you take today helps protect the people you care about tomorrow.