

Tornado Information

1. PURPOSE: To provide information about tornadoes, tornado safety planning, and the actions you should take when a TORNADO WATCH or TORNADO WARNING is announced.

2. GENERAL INFORMATION.

- a. A funnel cloud is not a tornado. It is a rotating column of air NOT in contact with the ground. It is usually attached to a thunderstorm cloud. There is a high probability of tornado development from a funnel cloud.
- b. A tornado is a violent rotating column of air in contact with the ground. The primary danger is destructive winds and flying debris.
- c. Tornado season is from April through October, with typical peak season for tornadoes occurring during the months of April, May and June. However, tornadoes can occur any time of the year.
- d. Predicting exact locations of tornado development is extremely difficult. National Weather Service (NWS) forecasters identify potential areas of storm development and advise communities to take shelter through a tornado alert system.

3. TORNADO ADVISORIES.

- a. The NWS has two levels of tornado preparedness, TORNADO WATCH and TORNADO WARNING. Fort Leavenworth, local TV, radio stations, and other emergency preparedness agencies also use these terms.
- b. A **TORNADO WATCH** means the conditions are favorable for the development of tornadoes.
 - (1) When a **TORNADO WATCH** is announced, DFMWR will do the following:
 - (a) Youth programs will terminate; i.e., outdoor sports and outdoor swimming pools.
 - (b) All DFMWR activities/programs will close/terminate; i.e., gymnasiums, community centers, and bowling center.
- c. A **TORNADO WARNING** means a tornado has been spotted in Leavenworth County or surrounding counties.

4. TORNADO SAFETY PLANNING. Remember the cardinal rules for tornado safety.

TORNADO WATCH - PREPARE TO SEEK SHELTER

TORNADO WARNING - TAKE SHELTER IMMEDIATELY

Have a plan for your family prior to severe weather occurring. Ensure to have an emergency kit. These simple preparations will minimize stress during emergencies.

a. Prepare your basement. Select an area which provides the best protection; i.e., under a heavy work bench, interior room, or under the stairs.

b. If you have no basement, arrange for shelter with a neighbor who has one. If that is not possible, select one of the community shelters on Fort Leavenworth and discuss this with your family.

c. Community shelter locations available at any hour a TORNADO WATCH is issued is:

- (1) Lewis & Clark (Building 127) after duty hours enter through the loading dock door, located on West side of building. During duty hours enter through any entrance in order to reach the basement shelter area.
- (2) Single Soldiers Quarters Bldg 635
- (3) Munson Army Health Center (Bldg 127)

d. During duty hours (0730-1630), the following are also emergency tornado shelters:

Post Office (Bldg 342)
Funston Hall (Bldg 314) (visitors)
McNair Hall (Bldg 286)(customers only)
Wagner Hall (Bldg 52)
Dodge Hall (Bldg 268)
New MacArthur Elementary (Bldg 2104) (Students, Staff, and visitors only)

e. If you must leave your quarters to take shelter, remember, time is extremely important. Practice these procedures with your family.

- (1) Know where the shelters are located.
- (2) Know how to get there.
- (3) Know how long it will take to get there in the worst traffic conditions.

(4) Know where to unload your family.

(5) Know where to park, secure your vehicle, and reach the shelter.

(6) Make a "necessity kit" to take to the shelter. Include a flashlight, first aid kit, and battery-powered radio.

f. General safety rules for community shelters.

(1) Always keep calm and quiet.

(2) Keep your family together.

(3) Minimize movement, especially of children.

(4) Take up as little room as possible.

(5) Obey all instructions of the shelter commander or assistant and/or military police in charge of the shelter.

(6) Monitor the radio for weather updates.

(7) **DO NOT BRING PETS OF ANY KIND TO THE SHELTER.** Decide now where you will put your pets.

g. Special safety planning notes.

(1) Instruct your baby-sitter on what to do during a TORNADO WATCH or WARNING.

(2) If your children are at post recreation facilities, make sure they understand what they should do during a TORNADO WATCH or WARNING.

5. TORNADO WATCH.

a. When the NWS announces a TORNADO WATCH for Leavenworth County, these actions will occur.

(1) The Director of Plans, Training, Mobilization & Security (DPTMS) Staff and/ or On-Call Will conduct notification procedures.

(2) DPTMS uses the AT Hoc Mass Warning Notification System (MWNS), post-wide PLECTRON Warning System, and Giant Voice Outdoor alert system to make these announcements to specific units/activities.

b. Follow these guidelines during a TORNADO WATCH.

- (1) Assemble the family.
- (2) Prepare to take shelter in your basement.
- (3) If no basement, move to a community shelter, if feasible.
- (4) Evacuate large buildings with vast unsupported ceilings such as auditoriums and gymnasiums.
- (5) Terminate outdoor activities.
- (6) Monitor TV and radio for storm condition updates.
- (7) Stay indoors and out of automobiles.

6. TORNADO WARNING.

a. A tornado has been spotted in Leavenworth County.

b. When the NWS announces a TORNADO WARNING for Leavenworth County:

- (1) DPTMS, and/or the Leavenworth County Office of Emergency Management will disseminate the WARNING.
- (2) The outdoor warning sirens will sound a 3-5 minute blast. If a second siren is sounded, that is **NOT AN ALL CLEAR.**
- (3) Radio and TV stations will announce the warning.

c. **TAKE SHELTER IMMEDIATELY-** You should go to (listed in priority):

- (1) A basement, if immediately available.
- (2) A designated community tornado shelter, if immediately available.
- (3) If no basement is available and movement to a public shelter is impractical, take immediate shelter in a small ground level room or closet. Stay away from windows. Take cover under heavy furniture, if possible. Extinguish all open flames.
- (4) A depression, ditch or ravine. Lie flat to lower your profile. (Caution - avoid locations prone to flash flooding.)

(5) If in an automobile; park immediately and seek shelter. Do not try to "out run" a tornado.

7. ALL CLEAR. Sirens will **NOT** be used to sound the "all clear."

a. The NWS will announce the "all clear" via radio/TV.

b. Local TV and radio stations will also announce the "all clear."

c. DPTMS will announce an all clear message using the AT Hoc MWNS for Tornado Watches/Warnings

8. For answers to questions about tornado safety planning, contact the Emergency Management Specialist (DPTMS) @ 684-0064.