

Emergency Preparedness

Tornado & Severe Weather Emergency

The National Weather Service has developed a method of identifying storm conditions that foster the development of tornadoes. The classification and definitions of storm conditions are:

- Tornado watch
- Tornado warning
- Other severe weather watch or warning

A “**tornado watch**” status indicates that weather conditions are favorable for the development of tornadoes. The watch areas” are usually large geographic areas, covering many counties or even states that could be affected by severe weather conditions including tornadoes.

A “**tornado warning**” is an alert issued by the National Weather Service after a tornado has been detected by radar or sighted by weather watchers or by the public. The National Weather Service provides the approximate time of detection, the location of the storm and the direction of movement. A tornado can move from 25 to 40 miles per hour so prompt emergency action must be taken.

During a tornado warning, a battery-powered radio should be used and tuned to the National Weather Service and local weather watchers radio frequency. Should a tornado develop which threatens our area, emergency response team members should initiate actions to notify and protect all staff, members, and visitors in the facility.

If a Tornado Warning is Announced

When you hear the announcement for a tornado warning:

- Shelter in place by moving to a designated tornado shelter area immediately. Move quickly, but do not run.
- Designated tornado shelters at Calvary are the basement, basement furnace room, all bathrooms, and the kitchen.
- **Assist disabled personnel in your area.**
- Shelter in place until you hear an announcement from a member of the safety response team and/or a hand-held radio system station (if applicable) that it is safe to return to your area.

Tornado Safety Basics

Familiarize yourself with the basics of protecting yourself wherever you may be.

If you are indoors, the general responses to a tornado warning are:

- Move away from windows. If you have time, close any window blinds or shades to help prevent

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flying glass and debris - the cause of most injuries in office buildings.

- Warn others. Encourage them to get to safety immediately.
- Move away from large expanses of unsupported ceilings.
- Move away from building perimeter area.
- Move to an interior room away from windows - to an enclosed room or conference room, a restroom, an interior stairwell.
- If in an interior hallway, away from windows, crouch down as low as possible.
- If moving to a safer location in the building is not possible, get under a desk or table in an interior office.
- Once you've situated yourself in the safest place you can find, protect your face and head, and stay where you are until an "all clear" signal is given. (If circumstances change and new dangers are present, seek a different safe place.)

If you are outdoors, the general responses to a tornado warning are:

- If at all possible, move indoors to an interior room.
- If moving indoors is not possible, take cover near objects that are low and securely anchored to the ground, such as culverts or low retaining walls.