

Thunderstorm

Preparedness Checklist

Thunderstorms are dangerous storms with lightning. A lightning strike can kill you.

Thunderstorms often bring:

- Powerful winds that can knock down trees, power lines, and mobile homes
- Intense rainfall that causes flash floods
- Tornadoes
- Lightning strikes that can spark fires
- Damaging hail

But we can take action to prepare. Prepare now to protect yourself, your loved ones, and your home.



What to Do: Before



Identify a Sturdy Building and Practice Drills

- You need to get inside a sturdy building before a thunderstorm hits. A sturdy building is a structure with walls and a foundation. Once you have identified a sturdy building, plan to shelter in the basement or a small, interior, windowless room on the lowest level to provide additional protection from high winds. Plan to stay inside until weather forecasts indicate it is safe to leave.
- Mobile, manufactured, trailer homes, and recreational vehicles (RVs) are not safe in high winds. If you live in one of these structures, you need to identify a sturdy building nearby that you can get to quickly.
- Practice drills with everyone in your household, so everyone knows where to go and what to do before a thunderstorm hits.



Plan to Stay Connected

- Sign up for free emergency alerts from your local government.
- Monitor local weather and news.
- Have a plan to keep your phone charged.
- In case of a power outage have a battery-powered radio.
- Understand the types of alerts that you may receive and have a plan to respond:
 - A WATCH means **Be Prepared!**
 - A WARNING means **Take Action!**



Learn Emergency Skills

- Learn First Aid and CPR.
- Utilities may be offline. Be prepared to live without power, gas, and water. Plan for your electrical needs, including cell phones and medical equipment.



Protect Your Home

- Make a list of items outside your home you will need to tie down or put away so that they don't blow away or fly through a window during high winds. When a High Wind, Severe Thunderstorm, or Tornado Watch, is issued, immediately secure these items to avoid damage or injury once the wind starts picking up.
- Secure objects that would be unsafe to bring inside, such as gas grills and propane tanks.
- Trim or remove trees close enough to fall on your home.
- Keep drains, gutters, and downspouts clean.
- Find out if your home is prone to flooding. If it is, consider:
 - Installing a sump pump with battery backup.
 - Elevating the heating system, water heater, and electrical panel.
- Review your home insurance policy. Check to see if you are covered for flood damage.

What to Do: During



When Thunder Roars, Go Indoors!

- Pay attention to weather alerts and local information. Postpone outdoor activities if the forecast calls for thunderstorms.
- When you hear thunder, seek shelter inside a sturdy building and move to a basement or an interior room on the lowest floor. Stay away from glass windows and doors. Stay inside until weather forecasts indicate it is safe to leave.
- Lightning can be dangerous even when you are inside.
 - Avoid using devices connected to electrical outlets.
 - Avoid running water. Lightning can travel through plumbing and water lines.
- Remember, no place outside is safe when thunderstorms are in the area. If you are caught outside in a thunderstorm, keep moving toward a safe shelter.

- Sheds, gazebos, dugouts, and bleachers do not protect from lightning and high winds.
- It is dangerous to take shelter under a tree as it is the leading cause of death from lightning strikes. You could also be killed or injured by strong winds blowing down trees and branches.
- Being in a vehicle is safer than being outside; however, if you have time, drive to the closest sturdy building, and take shelter inside.
- If you are driving and can't get to a sturdy building, pull off the road and park in a place where falling trees and power lines won't hit you.
- Flash flooding happens quickly. Move to higher ground before floodwaters reach you. Never walk, swim, or drive through floodwater. **Turn Around! Don't Drown!**

What to Do: After



Prevent Injuries

- Avoid fallen power lines, poles, and wires. They can electrocute you. Report them to the utility company immediately.
- Expect power outages.
 - Avoid using candles due to the risk of fires. Use battery-powered lights and flashlights instead.
 - Prevent carbon monoxide poisoning. Only use generators, grills, and camp stoves outdoors and away from windows.
 - Don't get sick from eating spoiled food. Throw out food that got wet or warm. When in doubt, throw it out!



Take Care of Yourself

- It's normal to have a lot of bad feelings, stress or anxiety.
- Eat healthy food and get enough sleep to help you deal with stress.
- You can contact the Disaster Distress Helpline for free if you need to talk to someone. Call or text **1-800-985-5990**.

Prepare so you can protect.

| For more information, visit redcross.org/prepare

| Download the Emergency App

