



because some things don't belong over the rainbow...



know them before you need them

FIRE DEPT PHONE

POLICE DEPT PHONE

INSURANCE AGENT PHONE

BUILDING OWNER PHONE

HVAC CONTRACTOR PHONE

ELECTRICIAN PHONE

PLUMBER PHONE

OTHER

Let's face it- mother nature isn't always very motherly. Unpredictable weather can mean unexpected and disastrous damage for self storage facility owners and tenants alike. Therefore, it's imperative to have a crisis management plan in place to protect your facilities, employees, clients and business reputation. Your response, under the stressful circumstances will speak the most to your character and business ethic.

Tornadoes can commence with little, to no warning, abolishing anything in their path, within a matter of minutes. Aside from imminent danger to people's actual lives, many tenants' lives, metaphorically speaking, are stored within your facility. So, for some, destroyed property equates to destroyed lives. The best way to prevent loss against the unexpected, is to be prepared. Part of being prepared is knowing how to react during and after a major storm, so we'll outline those helpful tips as well.

pre-tornado preparation

STEP 1: SECURE SUPPLIES + INFORMATION

Gather all emergency supplies + equipment, making sure that they are readily available and accessible to your on-site team. Set aside cash for post-tornado needs, such as buying food or supplies, in the event of a loss of power (this should include enough to pay employees and contractors).

tornado emergency kit

- **first aid kit:** over-the-counter painkillers, bandages, rubbing alcohol, eye rinse + burn kits, vomit-inducing medicine (for poisoning)
- **emergency lighting:** flashlights + extra batteries
- **more batteries:** you never know what you might need them for
- **shelter:** plastic covers and tarps
- **nourishment:** drinking water, non-perishable food + can opener (3-day supply)
- **whistles:** to signal or direct attention during storm
- **communication:** battery-powered radio, walkie-talkies, cell phones + spare batteries
- **warmth:** heavy or heated blankets + extra clothing
- **miscellaneous:** portable pumps, hoses, and hand or power tools
- **backups:** have all vital business records + contacts backed up off-site

TORNADO ACTION PLAN

self storage property risk management guide



STEP 2: INSPECTION + FORTIFICATION OF FACILITY

To prepare the actual facility for a tornado, check the following items. They will help minimize further damage, give you a plan in the event of an emergency, and help you stay up and running shortly after a disaster.

- **electrical:** check procedure for restoring electrical services for each item, shut down any non-essential electrical equipment
- **phone lines:** have phone redirection services (to cell) readily available or in place, in the event of evacuation
- **inventory:** maintain a running list of all assets and equipment for your business, in event of structural damage
- **power:** maintain + test generators, communication devices, and any other emergency devices, like snowblowers
- **heat:** determine if portable heaters are needed and available
- **evacuation:** map out all possible entrances + exits from your building, in the event that the main entrance is blocked
- **fire:** verify that all fire protection equipment is in-service, maintain automatic sprinkler protection in all buildings
- **fuel:** fill the fuel tanks of any/all generators, fire pumps and/or company-owned vehicles
- **temperature:** monitor building temperatures- especially in hard to heat areas, keep temperatures above 40°F
- **repairs:** identify which outside vendors + repair services are at your disposal (it is advisable to have vendors outside your local area, that would likely not be affected by the same storm)
- **secure + lock:** close and latch exterior doors, windows + roof hatches
- **anchors:** maintain straps or have other means on hand, to brace/anchor yard storage, signs, cranes or roof-mounted equipment
- **contingency:** ensure a contingency plan is up-to-date, should the tornado disrupt business production or operations



know the facts

The United States experiences **more tornadoes than any other country**, with an average of over **1,000** tornadoes each year

Tornadoes accounted for **39.9%** of **insured catastrophe losses** in the U.S from 1997-2016

Tornado Alley covers only **15%** of the U.S, yet it accounts for about **30%** of all tornadoes tracked from 1950-2012

mid-tornado procedures

STEP 1: IMMEDIATE ACTIONS

The following items are immediate actions the on-site team can take to help keep everyone safe and organized during a tornado storm.

- **prepare:** prepare to set up shelter in place, gathering all emergency supply kit resources
- **persons:** make sure all employees + on-site customers are safe and accounted for
- **boilers:** constantly monitor any boilers and other critical equipment that must remain online
- **property:** patrol the property, checking for pipe breakage, fire, or structural damage
- **disconnect:** disconnect automatic door openers, so that doors can be opened manually
- **seek shelter:** if you have a storm shelter, get everyone inside- if not, get everyone to the basement and hide under heavy objects (if a basement is not available, search for a windowless room like an interior bathroom at center of building- avoid areas with glass)

STEP 2: ONGOING ACTIONS

Once everyone is directed to a secured area, the following items are ongoing actions to help maintain a calm and safe storm shelter.

- **ensure + assure:** ensure employee + customer safety and give routine storm/relief updates
- **indoor safety:** do not use generators indoors, in a garage, or near air intakes because of carbon monoxide poisoning risk; do not store gasoline indoors where fumes could ignite
- **cords:** use individual, heavy-duty cords to plug in any appliances
- **stay low:** stay as low to the ground, with as many walls between you and outside, as possible, covering your head and neck with your arms
- **protective gear:** if you're not already wearing them, put on close-toed shoes and a helmet, if available, you may end up walking through debris, nails, sharp glass, etc.
- **windows:** it is a common misconception that opening windows can "equalize the pressure" created by a tornado, when in reality, opening windows can actually pressurize the building, causing the roof to be torn off

TORNADO ACTION PLAN

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post-tornado procedures

STEP 1: IMMEDIATE ACTIONS

Tornadoes come and go very quickly, and the damage can vary depending on location, population density, and cyclone size. In the immediate aftermath of a tornado, it is important to quickly, but safely, assess the situation.

- **persons:** do not move anyone seriously injured, provide search & rescue personnel with the last known location of any missing person(s)
- **open spaces:** if high-rise buildings are in the area, falling debris may make open spaces more dangerous than remaining inside building
- **fallen objects:** watch out for fallen power lines and broken gas lines and try to stay away from similar objects that could still fall
- **essentials:** make sure heating systems and water pipes are still in working order
- **electricity:** visually check for open bus bars, conductors and exposed insulators before re-energizing electrical systems
- **roof:** clear roof drains and debris from roofs that may cause injury or roof collapse
- **accommodate:** determine how you will assist individuals with special needs, such as disabled persons

STEP 2: RECOVERY ACTIONS

Once everyone is directed to a secured area, the following items are ongoing actions to help maintain a calm and safe storm shelter.

- **hazards:** look for safety hazards, such as live electrical wires, leaking gas, flammable liquids, toxic materials, and damage to foundations
- **sprinklers:** repair automatic sprinkler protection and/or water supplies to get protection in service asap, report impairments
- **assess:** following the tornado, assess damage and notify all critical personnel of next steps (management, owner, contractor, etc)
- **test:** conduct 2-inch main drain and alarm tests o automatic fire protection systems to verify public water supply availability
- **cover:** cover broken windows and damaged roof coverings immediately, to prevent further damage
- **air:** control smoking and maintain fire-safe conditions to preserve air quality, at all times
- **damages:** separate damaged goods & check refrigerators for spoilage in the event of power loss- limit access to maintain temperature

tornado information

IMPORTANT TERMS

tornado watch : Tornadoes are possible; remain alert for approaching storms; watch the sky and stay tuned to NOAA Weather Radio, a commercial radio, or television for information.

tornado warning : a tornado has been sighted or indicated by weather radar; take shelter immediately.

TORNADO WARNING SIGNS

Beyond preparing your property, it is important to learn the natural signs of a tornado and discuss what to do in the event of an emergency. Make sure you and your employees are aware of the following warning signs.

- **sudden change:** hail or heavy rain followed by either dead calm, or a fast, intense wind shift
- **noise:** a loud, continuous rumble that does not fade after a few seconds, a roar similar to a freight train, waterfall or jet
- **funnel:** a visible funnel cloud that has not yet touched the ground

additional tornado resources

- www.weather.gov
- www.fema.gov
- www.ready.gov/tornadoes
- www.spc.noaa.gov/faq/tornado