TORNADO

Safety Information

GENERAL INFORMATION

SCU is very concerned about the safety and well-being of everyone associated with the Main Campus in Bethany. During tornado season, we work to provide timely severe weather safety information that we hope will be carefully reviewed by everyone who receives it. We cannot overstate the importance of knowing how to respond to a tornado warning in central Oklahoma.

A **tornado's** destructive path may vary from 50 yards to one mile in width. Wind speed inside a tornado can reach up to 300 mph. Its forward speed will average 25 to 40 miles per hour. The following instructions for different areas and situations should be studied:

If you are in the open:
► Attempt to reach a protective area, such as a sturdy building with a basement.
► If there is not time to escape or find a suitable protective area, lie flat and face-down on low ground, protecting the back of your head with your arms. Get as far away from trees and cars as you can; they may be blown onto you in a tornado. Avoid areas subject to rapid water accumulation or flooding in heavy rains.

If you are in class:
►The instructor will dismiss the class immediately, after advising students to proceed to the Springer Library.

If you are attending a university function:
► The function will be terminated at once, and the participants will be advised promptly to seek a protective area like the Springer Library.
Buildings with broad, flat roofs or large open interior spaces *(such as auditoriums, cafeterias, or gymnasiums)* **should not be used** or considered as protective areas.

TORNADO SIRENS

Oklahoma City and the surrounding area maintain a citywide outdoor warning siren network that is used to signal imminent danger from tornadoes. It is a familiar sound, as it is tested every Saturday at noon, including cloudy and rainy Saturdays, unless there is a threat of severe weather in the area or a major event or venue is taking place.

A **tornado warning** issued from the National Weather Service with a "polygon" including any portion of Oklahoma City may be a cause for outdoor warning siren activation.
A steady siren for three to five minutes means **IMMINENT DANGER**. Take shelter immediately in the nearest suitable protective area and seek additional information. Protective areas should be identified in advance. *Once the sirens sound, it is **too late** to seek protection at a remote location.*
An *"all clear" signal* will NOT be given via the *siren system*. It is urged that reliance be placed on the broadcast media for this and other status and forecast information.

WEATHER ADVISORIES (AND "ALL-CLEAR" SIGNALS)

The National Weather Service broadcast continuous weather status and forecast information on a special frequency of **162.400 MHZ** from its Norman office for Oklahoma City and the surrounding area; this information is updated hourly. In addition, the NWS will broadcast special alert tones and messages for tornado warnings, flash flood warnings and similar impending weather emergencies.

Special radio receivers are available for purchase to monitor this frequency and receive the special alert warnings. Those persons or offices requiring current, official weather information or desiring to take advantage of the alert warning service should check with a local radio equipment dealer for further information.

The Norman Forecast Office conducts a ***weekly*** alert test, each Wednesday at noon, to allow weather radio owners to verify that their radios are functioning correctly. If there is a risk of severe weather around noon on Wednesday, the test is postponed until the next "good weather" day. For more tests details, visit: http://www.srh.noaa.gov/oun/wxradio/radiotests.php

It is recommended that all persons maintain a battery-operated AM and/or FM transistor radio and take that radio with them should it become necessary to seek a protective area from a tornado or other severe storm. Persons in protective areas should not rely on visual observations of local conditions as a reliable indicator of the true status of the weather, since hail and tornadoes have been known to occur under apparently clear-sky conditions.

Local AM/FM Radio Stations which may carry local weather
KTOK 1000 AM

CAMPUS PROTECTIVE AREAS

Protective areas from a tornado may be sought in buildings of substantial masonry construction; most University facilities have spaces that may be used as protective areas. These protective areas can usually be found in interior spaces or hallways away from exterior walls and windows.
Once the sirens sound, it is *too late* to proceed to a remote protective area. Occupants should stay alert to developing severe weather and have identified a suitable protective area beforehand. The lowest level of the building should be used, avoiding spaces with windows; close doors between your refuge area and adjacent windowed areas to limit flying debris. Buildings of frame construction and those with broad, flat roofs or large open interior spaces *(such as auditoriums, cafeterias, or gymnasiums)* **should not be used** or considered as protective areas.

Building-Specific Recommended Refuge Areas:

Springer Library

Recommended Refuge Areas:
Proceed to the lower level of the Administrative Building to the Springer Library. This is the lowest level on campus and is the safest place to be during a Tornado Warning.

AFTER THE TORNADO . . .
Keep with your group/family together and wait for emergency personnel to arrive. Carefully render aid to those who are injured. Stay away from power lines and puddles with wires in them; they may still be carrying electricity! Watch your step to avoid broken glass, nails, and other sharp objects. Stay out of any heavily damaged houses or buildings; they could collapse at any time. Do not use matches or lighters, in case of leaking natural gas pipes or fuel tanks nearby. Remain calm and alert, and listen for information and instructions from local radio, emergency crews, and local officials.

Local National Weather Service forecast information is available at www.srh.noaa.gov/oun.