



The University of Georgia

Office of Security & Emergency Preparedness

Tornado Safety Tips

The University of Georgia recognizes the potential threat that severe weather, specifically tornadoes, poses to the large, dispersed, and active University environment. The UGA Office of Security and Emergency Preparedness assembled these tips and suggestions to enable faculty, staff, students, and visitors to better prepare to handle a tornado event should one impact the campus.

Definitions of tornado watch and warning

- A **tornado watch** is issued by the National Weather Service when tornadoes are possible in the area.
- A **tornado warning** is issued when a tornado has been sighted or indicated by weather radar in the area.

Suggestions for pre-planning within campus buildings

Pre storm

- Identify and clearly post the location of safe sheltering areas throughout your facilities.
- Review and update telephone tree information for faculty and staff working in your building.
- Make sure all building or departmental NOAA severe weather radios are functioning and have back-up batteries.
- Conduct tornado drills each tornado season (spring and fall). The annual State Severe Weather Drill conducted every February is an ideal time to practice.
- Inform all students, faculty, staff, and visitors of actions to take in the event of a tornado warning.
- Subscribe to a weather related Internet site that sends email weather updates for your zip code. (Examples include: Weather.com, Breaking Weather.com, WeatherBug, etc.)
- Contact the UGA Office of Security and Emergency Preparedness if you need assistance with the emergency plan and safe sheltering areas within your building.
- Make sure your emergency contact information is correct in the UGA**Alert** System by logging into UGA**Alert** using a valid UGA MYId and password. Program 706-542-0111 into your phone as UGA**Alert** so you will immediately recognize all incoming calls from this number as UGA**Alert**.

When a tornado watch is issued

- Monitor your NOAA severe weather radio for emergency broadcasts or severe weather updates.
- Remind students, faculty, and staff of the safe locations within your building.
- Listen to a local television news or radio station to obtain up-to-date weather information.

When a tornado warning is issued

- Activate the emergency notification system for your building (public announcements, telephone tree, etc.).
- Make sure messages are delivered to classrooms, labs, athletic facilities, meeting rooms and other areas in your facility.
- Move to the safe sheltering areas in your building. If time permits, take a flashlight, first aid kit, and your NOAA weather radio so you can hear the “all clear” announcement.
- Reserve building elevators for individuals with mobility issues.

The University of Georgia Office of Security & Emergency Preparedness
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Tornado Safety Tips continued

Suggestions for students, faculty, and staff

Sheltering during a storm if inside a building

- Go to the basement or to an inside hallway at the lowest level of the building.
- Take your personal belongings if time permits (laptops, purses, book bags, etc.).
- Secure your work computer if time permits (logoff and shut down to minimize damage and potential loss of data).
- Lock offices and secure sensitive or confidential items (grade books, financial records, etc.) as time permits.
- Avoid places with wide-span roofs such as auditoriums, theater style rooms, cafeterias, large hallways, or gymnasiums
- Stay away from exterior windows and doors as well as display cases, shelving, or wall mounted audio visual equipment that could collapse on top of you.
- Get under a piece of sturdy furniture (if available) such as a workbench, heavy table, or desk, and hold on to it.
- Use your arms to protect your head and neck.

Sheltering during a storm if outdoors, in a vehicle, or on a campus bus

- Get inside a building if possible.
- Follow the instructions of your bus driver if you are riding Campus Transit or a city bus.
- Lie in a ditch, low-lying area, or crouch near a strong building if shelter is not available or if there is no time to get indoors.
- Be aware for the potential for flash flooding.
- Use your arms to protect to your head and neck.

Post storm suggestions

- Help injured, trapped, or persons with disabilities or special needs.
- Give first aid when appropriate. Don't try to move the seriously injured unless they are in immediate danger of further injury. Call the University Police at 706.542.2200 or 911 for help.
- Watch out for downed power lines and other damaged utilities when evacuating.
- Turn on a radio or television to get the latest emergency information.
- Stay out of damaged buildings. Return only when campus officials deem the building(s) to be safe.
- Limit use of telephones or cell phones to emergency calls only.
- Avoid spilled medicines, bleaches, gasoline, or other flammable liquids. Do not attempt to clean up spills without proper equipment.
- Leave the buildings if you smell gas or chemical fumes and notify the University Police at 706.542.2200.

Severe weather internet resource list

- www.weather.gov National Weather Service
- www.ohs.state.ga.us Georgia Office of Homeland Security
- www.fema.gov Federal Emergency Management Agency
- www.ready.gov National Readiness Web Site
- www.redcross.org American Red Cross
- www.osep.uga.edu UGA Office of Security and Emergency Preparedness

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