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## 6. Code Green: Severe Weather

### *Tornadoes*

Tornadoes are incredibly violent local storms that extend to the ground with whirling winds that can reach 300 mph.

Spawned from powerful thunderstorms, tornadoes can uproot trees and buildings and turn harmless objects into deadly missiles in a matter of seconds. Damage paths can be in excess of one mile wide and 50 miles long.

Tornadoes can occur in any state but occur more frequently in the Midwest, Southeast, and Southwest. They occur with little or no warning.

**Tornado Watch**—Atmospheric conditions are right for tornadoes to potentially develop. Be ready to take shelter. Stay tuned to radio and television stations for additional information.

**Tornado Warning**—A tornado has been sighted in the area or is indicated by radar. Take shelter immediately.

#### **Planning Considerations for Tornadoes:**

- Consult with \_\_\_\_\_ (*county name*) Emergency Management officials regarding its tornado warning system
- Purchase a National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Weather Radio with a warning alarm tone and battery backup. Listen for tornado **watches** and **warnings**
- Establish procedures to inform personnel when **tornado warnings** are posted. Consider the need for spotters to be responsible for looking out for approaching storms
- Consult with Emergency Management officials or National Weather Service office for guidance in designating shelter space
- Consider the amount of space you will need. Adults require about six square feet of space. Nursing home and hospital residents require more
- The best protection in a tornado is usually an underground area. If an underground area is not available, consider:
  - Small interior rooms on the lowest floor without windows
  - Hallways on the lowest floor away from doors and windows
  - Rooms constructed with reinforced concrete, brick, or block with no windows and a heavy concrete floor or roof system overhead
  - Protected areas away from doors and windows
  - *Note: Auditoriums, cafeterias, and gymnasiums that are covered with flat, wide-span roofs are not considered safe*
- Make plans for evacuating personnel away from lightweight modular offices or mobile home-sized buildings. These structures offer no protection from tornadoes
- Conduct tornado drills