

# Hazardous Weather Preparedness Guide

## BE A STORM SURVIVOR AT HOME

A quick reference guide to help you prepare for weather dangers prepared by the Lewes "Project Impact" partnership...

- ✓ **Be Prepared!** Know the safest place in your home and designate it as your "Safe Space". Don't wait for a storm's arrival to do this.
- ✓ **Know The Danger Signs!** When a **WATCH** is issued, go about your business but check on changing weather conditions about every 15-30 minutes.
- ✓ When a **WARNING** is issued for your area, go to your Safe Space immediately! Stay away from outside walls, windows and doors. Cover your head and neck with your hands.
- ✓ **Know Where To Go!** Going underground for shelter is best, such as a basement. If you have no basement, go to the center-most room on the lowest level of your home. This might be a bathroom, closet or interior hallway. In mobile homes, you are advised to leave it and find a more secure shelter or lie flat in a ditch until the danger passes. In multi-level or high rise buildings, go to the smallest center room or hallway away from glass windows and open areas.



### STORM SURVIVAL TIP

You should designate a "Safe Space" in your home long before storms threaten. Include these items in your shelter:

- Flashlight
- First Aid Kit
- Batteries
- Gloves
- Battery operated radio
- Extra shoes
- Cell phone
- Drinking water
- Non-perishable food
- Emergency phone numbers

# BE A STORM SURVIVOR AT SCHOOL

- ✓ **Watch for changing weather**
- ✓ **Monitor impending severe weather** with a NOAA weather radio that is equipped with a tone alert siren. This will serve to warn school administrators quickly if a severe weather warning is issued for your district.
- ✓ **Know the "Safe Spots" in your school**
- ✓ **Designate a "safe area"** for students and faculty to seek shelter from the storm. These areas should be clearly marked and easily accessible in the event of a weather emergency.
- ✓ **The safest areas** in your school are likely to include main hallways away from windows and outside doors. Students should kneel down, face the wall and cover their heads and necks with their hands.
- ✓ **The safest place is "in" the school.** If school is about to dismiss and severe weather is occurring or is about to strike, it's best to hold all students until the danger passes. One of the most dangerous places to be in severe weather is in a school bus or automobile.



## STORM SURVIVAL TIP

When severe weather approaches, **stay away** from these areas:

- Gymnasium
- Large span rooms
- Auditorium
- Classrooms with windows

# BE A STORM SURVIVOR AT WORK

- ✓ **Check the weather early!** It's always a good idea to check your local forecast before leaving for work each day. Whatever your source...TV, radio, NOAA weather radio, internet or newspaper, one or more of these sources should give you ample "heads-up" of possible severe weather that day.
- ✓ **Know the "Safe Spots"** in your workplace. Most workplaces have designated storm shelters that are clearly marked. If not, contact your manager or supervisor to discuss developing a severe weather procedure for all of your fellow employees.
- ✓ **When severe weather strikes,** avoid wide open buildings and warehouses. Locate the smallest possible room nearest to you and get under something sturdy. Stay away from any outside walls, windows and doors...especially large bay doors and loading docks.
- ✓ **It's also a good idea for someone to monitor** the progress of impending severe weather through media, internet or by a NOAA weather radio with a tone alert siren.



## STORM SURVIVAL TIP

While at work and severe weather approaches, always:

- Move to the lowest floor level
- Find the center-most room
- Stay away from outside windows
- Prepare for power failure

## BE A STORM SURVIVOR AT PLAY

- ✓ **Always watch the skies!** It's up to each one of us to closely monitor changing weather while enjoying the great outdoors. Keep a battery powered radio with you at all times and listen for severe weather threats in your area.
- ✓ **Don't wait for the storm to hit...**check on the latest forecast as soon as you see dark skies approaching!
- ✓ **When storm clouds loom overhead,** make sure any outdoor games are postponed and everyone is moved to a secure shelter. Put down golf clubs and any metal objects.
- ✓ **What if you're caught outside?** Thunder is the sound lightning makes so even though you may not have seen a flash, there was lightning and it can strike at long distances. Keep away from metal buildings, trees, fences and water. These are all attractive to lightning. Hurry to the nearest indoor shelter.



### STORM SURVIVAL TIP

Lightning is one of nature's worst killers. If you're caught in the open and you cannot seek shelter from lightning, squat low to the ground on the balls of your feet...place your hands over your ears and your head between your knees. Do not lie down! Make yourself the smallest target possible. In Flash Floods, never attempt to cross flooded roadways. Most deaths from flooding are caused when vehicles are washed away by raging flood waters

## BE A STORM SURVIVOR AT THE WHEEL

- ✓ **Never try to outrun the storm!** Storms are best survived in a secure shelter, but can also be survived in an automobile by following some practical guidelines. While traveling, always check the latest weather conditions by radio. If you know you're about to approach severe storms, find the safest route around the weather if you can.
- ✓ **If you should happen to approach a tornado** or one is approaching you, stop your vehicle immediately...get out of it...and find a ditch or a substantial building for shelter.
- ✓ **Always in control.** Severe storms, tornadoes, flash flooding and intense straight line winds can cause you to lose control of your vehicle. Always hold the steering wheel at the "10 and 2" o'clock positions. If there have been heavy rains, be aware of hydroplaning on rain slick highways.
- ✓ **Watch out for fallen debris** from severe storms such as trees and power lines. Never attempt to cross flooded roadways...even if you feel you know how deep it is. Your vehicle could stall and you might become trapped inside.



### STORM SURVIVAL TIP

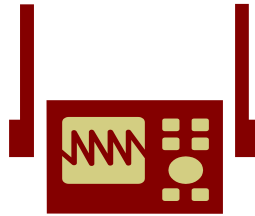
Keep a storm survival kit in your vehicle at all times. Items such as a First Aid kit, flashlight, blankets, ice melting solution and tools should always be stored in your car for weather emergencies. Having cellular phone access adds security and will aid you in reaching help quickly by dialing 911.

## UNDERSTANDING EARLY WARNING

✓ **WATCH** means conditions are favorable for severe weather to develop soon in your area. Go about your business, but continue to monitor the changing weather every 15-30 minutes. Have a plan of action ready in case a warning is issued.

✓ **WARNING** means severe weather has been detected or sighted in your area.

**SEEK SHELTER IMMEDIATELY!**



## WAYS TO MONITOR FOR SEVERE WEATHER

Local television channels  
Internet-Weather web sites  
Local radio stations  
Outdoor warning sirens\*  
Personal pagers/cell phones\*\*  
NOAA Weather Radios with tone alert siren\*\*\*

\* Not available in all communities

\*\* Not all pagers and/or cell phones are capable to receive text messages. Check your local wireless company for details.

\*\*\* NOAA Weather Radios are best for instant information about severe weather watches and warnings in your area. These specially equipped radios pick up only broadcasts from your area's National Weather Service Office 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. In severe weather situations, your NOAA Weather Radio will sound an alarm anytime severe weather threatens if it is equipped with a Tone Alert Siren. Much newer models are capable of warning you only if the severe weather is expected to reach your specific county. Ask your local electronics retailer about "S.A.M.E." (Specific Area Message Encoding) model radios. They can also help program your radio before you leave the store.

### For More Information

Download severe weather information provided in this guide and learn more about disaster preparedness.

- DELAWARE EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY: <http://www.state.de.us/dema>
- FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY: <http://www.fema.gov/>
- THE AMERICAN RED CROSS: <http://www.redcross.org/>