

...THIS WEEK IS TORNADO AND SEVERE WEATHER AWARENESS WEEK IN WISCONSIN...

TODAY`S TOPIC IS TORNADOES.

A TORNADO IS DEFINED AS A VIOLENTLY ROTATING COLUMN OF AIR IN CONTACT WITH THE GROUND. IT MAY NOT ALWAYS BE EASILY VISIBLE UNTIL DIRT AND DEBRIS ARE PICKED UP ALONG THE GROUND.

MOST WISCONSIN TORNADOES ARE RELATIVELY WEAK WITH WIND SPEEDS LESS THAN 110 MPH...BUT CAN CERTAINLY PRODUCE WIND GUSTS HIGHER THAN 200 MPH.

MAY AND JUNE ARE THE PEAK TORNADO MONTHS. THEY CAN OCCUR IN JUST ABOUT ANY MONTH AND AT ANY TIME OF DAY. PEAK TORNADO TIMES ARE BETWEEN 3 AND 9 PM.

TORNADO INTENSITY AND PEAK WINDS ARE ESTIMATED BASED ON THE AMOUNT OF DAMAGE THE STORM CAUSES. THIS INTENSITY RATING IS CALLED THE ENHANCED FUJITA SCALE AND RANGES FROM EF0 TO EF5. MOST TORNADOES IN WISCONSIN ARE EF0 OR EF1. THE LAST EF5 TORNADO IN WISCONSIN OCCURRED IN OAKFIELD IN FOND DU LAC COUNTY ON JULY 18 1996.

THE BEST RULE OF THUMB WHEN A TORNADO IS SPOTTED OR A WARNING IS ISSUED FOR YOUR AREA IS TO GET BELOW GROUND. IN A BASEMENT...FIND SOMETHING STURDY TO GET UNDER. IF YOU HAVE NO BASEMENT...GO TO THE LOWEST LEVEL OF YOUR HOME OR BUSINESS AND MOVE TO AN INTERIOR ROOM LIKE A BATHROOM OR CLOSET. PUT AS MANY WALLS BETWEEN YOU AND THE OUTSIDE AS POSSIBLE.

AT SCHOOLS...CHILDREN SHOULD BE MOVED INTO INTERIOR AREAS LIKE SMALLER ROOMS...BATHROOMS...OR HALLWAYS. DO NOT SELECT HALLWAYS THAT MAY BECOME WIND TUNNELS IF EXTERIOR DOORS ARE BLOWN OFF. AVOID LARGE SPAN ROOMS LIKE GYMNASIUMS...AUDITORIUMS...AND CAFETERIAS.

IF YOU ARE DRIVING AND SPOT A TORNADO...DRIVE AWAY IF YOU CAN CLEARLY MOVE AT A 90 DEGREE ANGLE. IF YOU HAVE NO ESCAPE PATH... LEAVE YOUR VEHICLE FOR A SHELTER OR DITCH. IF NO DITCH...PULL THE VEHICLE OVER...FASTEN YOUR SEATBELT AND GET YOUR HEAD BELOW THE WINDOWS. GET AS LOW AS POSSIBLE AND PROTECT YOUR HEAD.

MOST IMPORTANTLY...KNOW IN ADVANCE WHEN TORNADOES ARE EXPECTED. MANY LARGE TORNADO OUTBREAKS...LIKE THE STORMS THAT STRUCK THE PLAINS STATES LAST WEEKEND...ARE WELL FORECAST. LISTEN FOR TORNADO WATCHES AND WARNINGS AND BE PREPARED.

ALWAYS MONITOR CURRENT AND FORECAST WEATHER CONDITIONS...AND KEEP UP TO DATE ON THE LATEST SEVERE WEATHER WATCHES AND WARNINGS.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON SEVERE WEATHER...VISIT THE NWS GREEN BAY WEBSITE... [WWW.WEATHER.GOV/GRB](http://WWW.WEATHER.GOV/GRB)