

# National Weather Alerts

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## Terminology

The most common alerts issued for this area are described below:

### **Severe Thunderstorm Watch:**

Conditions are favorable for the development of severe thunderstorms in and close to the watch area. Watches are usually in effect for several hours, with 6 hours being the most common.

### **Severe Thunderstorm Warning:**

Issued when a thunderstorm produces hail 1 inch or larger in diameter and/or winds which equal or exceed 58 mph. Severe thunderstorms can result in the loss of life and/or property. Tornadoes can also and do develop in severe thunderstorms without the issuance of a tornado warning.

### **Tornado Watch:**

Conditions are favorable for the development of severe thunderstorms producing tornadoes in and close to the watch area. Watches are usually in effect for several hours, with 6 hours being the most common.

### **Tornado Warning:**

Tornado is indicated by radar or sighted by storm spotters. The warning will include where the tornado is and what towns will be in its path (also automatically indicates a Severe Thunderstorm Warning).

### **Winter Storm Warning:**

A winter storm warning is issued in the United States by the National Weather Service when weather conditions are favorable for severe winter weather including snow, ice and blizzard conditions.

### **Flash Flood Warning:**

Signifies a dangerous situation where rapid flooding of small rivers, streams, creeks, or urban areas are imminent or already occurring. Very heavy rain that falls in a short time period can lead to flash flooding, depending on local terrain, ground cover, degree of urbanization, degree of man-made changes to river banks, and initial ground or river conditions.

## Response

Below is an appropriate response to the Alert issued by the National Weather Service. If you would have any questions contact your RD;

Keep in mind that even though the weather may be calm at the time a Tornado or Severe Thunderstorm Watch or Warning is issued for your area, conditions can rapidly deteriorate and become life threatening. Always heed warnings even if warnings issued for your area in the past did not result in severe weather

Find shelter immediately if you are caught outside during a thunderstorm. Postpone outdoor activities until at least 30 minutes after the last clap of lightning. Take shelter inside. Unplug electrical items such as computers that a power surge can damage.

A watch does not indicate that a tornado is imminent, but is intended to alert the populace to be prepared for a tornado warning. The NWS issues tornado watches so that people become attentive to the weather conditions where they are.

When a tornado warning is issued you should move to the most sheltered location available, go to the innermost, preferably windowless room like a walk-in closet or bathroom on the lowest floor of the building.

Try not to get impatient, angry or frustrated. Everyone around you is going through the same thing and working together is the best way to get through tough times. Getting irritated won't help matters, and can actually cause accidents.

Stay away from high water, storm drains, ditches, ravines, or culverts. Even moving water only six inches deep can knock you off your feet.

