

2023 TORNADO/SEVERE WEATHER RESPONSE PLAN

Tyler / Smith County



This plan can be accessed at the following links:

<https://www.cityoftyler.org/government/departments/fire-department/emergency-management/emergency-management>

<https://www.smith-county.com/government/departments/emergency-management>

PURPOSE

This plan is designed to serve as a guide and to provide useful information to the public. Users of this plan are encouraged to direct all questions to the appropriate designated agencies.

AS ALWAYS, IN AN EMERGENCY SITUATION, PLEASE CALL 911

SCIENCE

Tornadoes are a destructive force that in the United States occur an average 1300 times annually, resulting in an average of 80 deaths per year. In Texas alone, tornadoes occur an average of 137 times annually, resulting in an average of 8 deaths per year. A single tornado or an outbreak of tornadoes can kill dozens at one time and can cause widespread damage.

A tornado is defined as a violently rotating column of air extending from a thunderstorm to the ground. The most violent tornadoes are capable of tremendous destruction with wind speeds of 300 mph or more. Damage paths can be in excess of one mile wide and 50 miles long.

Likely conditions indicating a tornado include a dark, greenish sky, large hail, a wall cloud, and a loud roar similar to a freight train. Tornadoes may appear as a visible funnel extending partially or fully to the ground and may be accompanied by debris. While some tornadoes are clearly visible, they can be nearly transparent until they have picked up dust and debris, or they may be hidden or obscured by rain or low-hanging clouds.

Tornadoes can happen during any time of the year and at any time of the day. They may strike quickly and without warning. In East Texas, peak tornado season is from mid-March through mid-June. There is a second peak time for tornado outbreaks that occurs from September through October. Tornadoes are most likely to occur between 3 p.m. and 9 p.m.

Other hazardous conditions often associated with tornadoes include flash floods, lightning, damaging straight-line winds, and large hail. Hurricanes bring an increased threat of tornadoes to our region.

TORNADO WATCH - The National Weather Service has forecast that tornadoes are *likely to occur* in the watch area. Check supply kits. Be ready to act quickly and to take shelter. Monitor radio and television stations for more information.

TORNADO WARNING - A tornado *has been sighted in the area or has been indicated by radar.*
TAKE SHELTER IMMEDIATELY.

Most people who are injured or who die in a tornado are struck by flying debris or are crushed under falling objects or collapsing buildings. It is therefore imperative that proper precautions be taken before, during, and after a tornado.

PRECAUTIONS

BEFORE A TORNADO

- Sign up for **RAVE** alerts. Tyler and Smith County switched from Code Red to Smart 911 and the RAVE Alert system through their partnership with the ETCOG.
 - City of Tyler residents:
<https://www.smart911.com/smart911/registration/registrationLanding.action?cdnExternalPath=>
or click on the link at <http://fire.cityoftyler.org> and scroll to the bottom of the page
 - Smith County residents: <https://www.smart911.com/smart911/ref/reg.action?pa=smithcounty>
or click on the link at <https://www.smith-county.com/government/departments/emergency-management>
- Download the Red Cross “Emergency and First Aid” app from your smart device app store
- Listen for warning sirens, where available
- Monitor local TV and radio weather stations for the latest updates
- Monitor NOAA Weather Radio
- Build an emergency kit (www.ready.gov/build-a-kit) and have a family communications plan (www.ready.gov/make-a-plan)
- Become trained in CPR and First Aid to include Bleeding Control. Encourage your friends and family to do the same
- Be alert to changing weather conditions and look for approaching storms
- Be prepared to take shelter immediately if you see any of the warning signs or if a tornado warning is issued for your area
 - Dark, greenish sky
 - Large, dark, low flying clouds, especially one that is rotating
 - Large hail
 - Loud roar, similar to a train

EXTRA MEASURES FOR PEOPLE WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

- Write down your specific needs, limitations, capabilities, and medications. Keep this list near you always--perhaps in your purse or wallet
- Find someone nearby (a spouse, roommate, friend, neighbor, relative, or co-worker) who will agree to assist you in case of an emergency. Give this person a copy of your list. You may also want to provide a spare key to your home, or directions to find a key
- Keep aware of weather conditions through whatever means are accessible to you, such as closed captioning or scrolled warnings on TV
- People with disabilities such as access and functional needs, including limited mobility, communication barriers, transportation assistance, personal care, and special medical assistance, should register with the **State of Texas Emergency Assistance Register (STEAR)-Public**.
<https://www.dps.texas.gov/dem/stear/public.htm>.
- If you do not have access to the internet, you can register for STEAR over the phone by dialing **211**.

IDENTIFICATION OF ISOLATED/ELDERLY AT RISK INDIVIDUALS

7-10% may not have a telephone. Action individuals or agencies include:

- Local Fire Departments
- Neighborhood Crime Watch
- Local Law Enforcement Agencies (especially Beat Officers)
- Emergency Medical Services (EMS)
- Meals on Wheels
- Senior Citizen Center
- Hospital Social Workers
- Home Health Nursing
- Animal Control Officers
- Church Volunteers
- Citizen Volunteers
- Friends and Family
- Public Health Case Managers/Outreach Workers
- Emergency Care Centers/Emergency Rooms/other Medical Facilities
- East Texas Council for Independent Living, for disabled residents

WELFARE CONCERN

Should concern exist and a visit be necessary, please contact the Tyler Police Department at (903) 531-1000 or the Smith County Sheriff's Department at (903) 566-6600 or call 911.

DURING A TORNADO

- **If you are in a sturdy shelter**
 - Go to a pre-designated area such as a safe room, a basement, a storm cellar, or the lowest level in the building. If there is no basement, go to the center of a small interior room on the lowest level away from doors, windows, and outside walls.
 - Get under a sturdy table and use your arms to protect your head and your neck.
- **If you are in a manufactured home or office**
 - Get out immediately. Go to a pre-identified location such as the lowest floor of a sturdy, nearby building or a storm shelter. Mobile homes, even if tied down, offer little protection from tornadoes.
- **If you are outside with no shelter**, there is no single research-based recommendation for what is the best last resort action that you should take, as many factors can affect your decision. However, possible actions include
 - Immediately get into a vehicle, buckle your seat belt and drive to the closest sturdy shelter. If your vehicle is hit by flying debris while you are driving, pull over and park. Never try to outrun a tornado in urban or congested areas. Instead, leave the vehicle immediately for safe shelter.
 - If unable to reach a sturdy shelter, take cover in a stationary vehicle. Put the seat belt on and cover your head with your arms and a blanket, coat or other cushion if possible.
 - Lie in an area noticeably lower than the level of the roadway and cover your head with your arms and a blanket, coat or other cushion if possible.
- **In all situations:**
 - Do not get under an overpass or bridge. You are safer in a low, flat location.
 - Watch out for flying debris. Most fatalities and injuries are caused by flying debris.

AFTER A TORNADO

Many injuries occur after a tornado due to walking through damaged debris or upon entering or exiting damaged buildings. Proper care must be taken to avoid further injury or death.

- **General precautions**

- Continue to monitor a battery powered radio for news and weather
- Use battery powered flashlights. Do not use open flame, such as a candle
- Cooperate fully with public safety officials
- Do not enter damaged structures
- Be aware of hazards from broken glass, nails, and debris
- Report downed power lines to 911. Do not touch downed power lines or objects that are in contact with downed power lines
- Respond to requests for volunteer assistance by public safety officials and relief organizations, but do not go into damaged areas unless assistance has been requested. Your presence could hamper relief efforts and you could endanger yourself and others
- If your home is damaged, shut off utilities to avoid fire, electrocution, and explosion

- **Injuries**

- Check for injuries
- Call 911
- Do not attempt to move seriously injured persons unless they are in immediate danger of further injury
- If someone has stopped breathing, begin CPR. If you are not trained in CPR, 911 will be able to guide you through the proper procedure.
- If you are trapped, or if you discover someone who is trapped, try to attract attention to your location and notify 911. Only attempt rescue if the victim's life is in imminent danger and use extreme caution. If at all possible wait for First Responders to arrive.

- **Other unsafe conditions**

- Immediately report all unsafe conditions to 911

POWER LINE / TREE LIMB ISSUES

To report electrical / power line issues or a tree limb concerns, call Oncor at (888) 313-6862 or visit the website at <http://www.askoncor.com/>.

HAZARDOUS STREETS

To report hazardous street conditions in the City of Tyler, call (903) 535-1000. In Smith County call (903) 566-6600

SHELTERS

Overnight Locations:

- Salvation Army 24-hour shelter for homeless or near homeless with a capacity of 200. Additional space for 250 will be available in the Disaster Shelter. (903) 592-4361.
- Red Cross Open on demand, dependent upon declared emergency.
Matt Brown, Disaster Program Manager, (903) 581-7981 or (903) 216-6786

Daytime Locations:

- Medical Facilities including local hospitals, clinics, and stand-alone emergency rooms.
- Salvation Army 633 N. Broadway, Open 24 hours, 7 days a week, (903) 592-4361
- Local Fire Stations Check with individual facilities regarding activities and accommodations
- Broadway Square Mall and other retail outlets On City bus route
- Hiway 80 Rescue Mission 601 E. Valentine (903) 617-6097 or (903) 216-9183 8:30am-11:30am and 1:00pm – 4:00pm
- Movie Theatres: Check with individual facilities regarding activities and accommodations
- Churches: Check with individual facilities regarding activities and accommodations
- Schools: On hold at this time. Depends on a declared emergency and whether school is in session

City of Tyler Facilities:

- Tyler Fire Department: Various locations. Call 903-535-0005 or 911
- Glass Recreation Center: 501 W. 32nd St., Monday through Friday 7am-10pm, Saturday 9am-3pm, closed Sunday. Open to the public during posted hours with estimated capacity of 500 individuals. Activities can be scheduled by calling (903) 595-7271
- Tyler Public Library: 201 S. College. Monday through Thursday 10am-7pm, Friday 10am-6pm, Saturday 10am-5pm, Sunday 1pm-5pm. Open to the public during posted hours with an estimated capacity of 120 individuals. Activities can be scheduled through the library for Taylor Auditorium (capacity 100) by calling (903) 593-7323
- Senior Citizen Activity Center: 1915 Garden Valley Road, (903) 597-0781 for additional information about services, 8am to 5pm Monday through Friday, estimated capacity 125
- Rose Garden: 420 Rose Park Drive, (903) 531-1349, 8am-5pm. Monday through Friday with an estimated capacity 200

Smith County Day Time Locations

- Smith County Office of Emergency Management (903) 590-2655
- Smith County ESD #1 (903) 882-3443
- Smith County ESD #2 (903) 617-6578
- Smith County Sheriff's Office non-emergency (903) 566-6600
- 911

PUBLIC AFFAIRS NETWORK/HOTLINE

Provides updated information to the public

- **2-1-1** Texas www.211texas.org
- Northeast Texas Public Health District (903) 535-0037 www.mynethealth.org
- City of Tyler Access Channel (903) 533-7444 www.cityoftyler.org
- Ready.Gov www.ready.gov
- Christus Trinity Mother Frances Hospital (903) 593-8441 www.tmfhc.org
- UT Health Tyler (903) 877-7000 www.uthct.edu
- United Way of Smith County (903) 581-6376 www.uwsmithcounty.org
- Salvation Army (903) 592-4361 www.salvationarmytexas.org/tyler
- American Red Cross: Tyler (903) 581-7981 / Longview: (903) 753-2091
<http://www.redcross.org/local/texas/north-texas/locations/east-texas>
Phone Apps are available through smartphone app store.
- Tyler Morning Telegraph (903) 597-8111 www.tylerpaper.com
- KTBB 97.5 FM / KRWR 92.1 FM (903) 593-2519 www.ktbb.com
- KETK NBC 56 (903) 581-5656 www.ketk.com
- KLTV Channel 7 (903) 510-7777 www.kltv.com
- KYTX CBS 19 (903) 581-2211 www.cbs19.tv
- Alpha Media Group KOYE (La Invasora) 96.7 FM, KKUS 104.1 FM, KYKX 105.7 FM, KOOI 106.5 FM (903) 581-9966
- Town Square Media KTYL 93.1 FM, KKTZ 96.1 FM, KNUE 101.5 FM, KISX 107.3 FM, (903) 581-0606
- Reynolds Radio Mega FM 99.3, The Blaze 102.7/106.9 FM, (903) 581-5259
- Other Media – See Telephone Book
- MEGA 99.3 KAPW (903)-581-5259 Other Media (see telephone book)
- City of Tyler Access Channel, www.cityoftyler.org, or (903) 533-7444
- SMITH COUNTY PIO 1-903-590-4607
- ATMOS Gas Service 1-866-322-8667 to report a natural gas emergency (24/7)
- Center Point Energy 1-800-259-5544 to report a natural gas emergency (24/7)
- ONCOR 1-888-313-4747 to report down lines, power outages (24/7)
- **Health Care Facilities**
 - Christus Trinity Mother Frances - Telecare Plus (903) 531-5678 or (800) 535-9799
 - UT Health Tyler 903-597-0351
 - UT Health Center at Tyler Emergency Room (903) 877-7777

National Weather Service Reporting

Dial #1-800-551-8338 Sky Warn Spotter reporting line to report severe weather events.

WATER

Bottled water **might be** available from:

- Salvation Army (903) 592-4361 www.salvationarmytexas.org/tyler
- PATH (903) 597-4044 www.pathhelps.org

DONATIONS OF MATERIALS

The following agencies working in close partnership will accept donations of food, water, and other supplies and appropriately distribute them. This includes donated transportation services:

- Tyler Fire Department (903) 535-0005
- People Attempting To Help (PATH) (903) 597-4044
- Salvation Army (903) 592-4361
- Meals on Wheels (903) 593-7385
- KLTV Channel 7 (903) 510-7777
- KETK NBC56 (903) 581-5656
- KYTX CBS19 (903) 581-2211
- Smith County ESD #2 and Volunteer Fire Departments (903) 617-6578
- Smith County Office of Emergency Management (903) 590-2655

USERS OF THIS PLAN:

Users of this plan are encouraged to direct questions to the above identified agencies. Should issues not be addressed in the plan, or if questions remain unanswered, users should contact the lead agency.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Go to [Ready.gov](#) for additional information on building your emergency disaster kit and to create a plan in case a disaster or emergency arises.

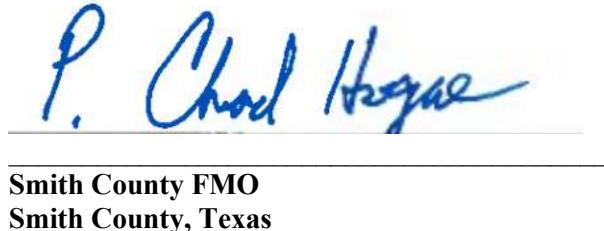
REVIEWED:



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Chief Executive Officer
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P. Chad Hayes

Smith County FMO
Smith County, Texas