



NOAA Weather Radio Helps to Save Lives

The NOAA Weather Radio is an “all hazards” radio network used to obtain comprehensive weather and emergency information. The weather radio has the capability to broadcast warning and post-event information for all hazards, including natural, environmental, and public safety.

Weather radios are equipped with special alarm-tone features that sound alerts to give immediate information about a life-threatening situation. During an emergency, NWS forecasters will interrupt routine weather radio programming and broadcast a special tone that activates weather radios in the listening area.

Tone-alert weather radios should be standard equipment in every home and in places that are entrusted with public safety, such as schools, hospitals, nursing homes, restaurants, stores, office buildings, recreation centers, sports facilities, and other public gathering places.

Information and protection position illustration are provided by the **National Weather Service**, one of 14 agencies and organizations represented on the Ohio Committee for Severe Weather Awareness.

- American Red Cross
- Emergency Management Association of Ohio
- National Weather Service
- Ohio Citizen Corps
- Ohio Department of Aging
- Ohio Department of Commerce-State Fire Marshal
- Ohio Department of Education
- Ohio Department of Health
- Ohio Department of Insurance
- Ohio Department of Mental Health
- Ohio Department of Natural Resources
- Ohio Department of Public Safety – Ohio EMA
- Ohio Department of Transportation
- Ohio Insurance Institute



The Ohio Committee for Severe Weather Awareness has been dedicated in educating Ohioans about severe weather safety and preparedness since 1978.

www.weathersafety.ohio.gov

Tornado Safety and Preparedness

Information for Ohio Schools

Make a School Safety Plan.
Practice Tornado Drills. Be Prepared.

A **tornado** is a violently rotating column of air that extends from the base of a thunderstorm. A condensation funnel does not need to reach the ground for a tornado to be present. A debris cloud beneath a thunderstorm is all that is needed to confirm the presence of a tornado.

Know the Difference Between a Tornado Watch and a Tornado Warning

A **Tornado Watch** is issued by the NWS when conditions are favorable for the development of tornadoes. Watches can last 4-8 hours. During a tornado watch, you should review tornado safety rules and be prepared to move to a place of safety. Listen to a NOAA Weather Radio or local news for up-to-date weather information.

A **Tornado Warning** is issued when a tornado has been detected by Doppler radar or sighted by storm spotters. If a tornado warning is issued for your area, seek shelter immediately! A tornado watch does not have to be in effect for a tornado to form. Continue to listen to the NOAA Weather Radio or local newscasts for current weather information.

Instructors: Teach students to get into a protective position when instructed. Students should face an interior wall with knees and elbows on the floor, and protect their heads with their hands clamped behind the neck.



Tornado Safety

Tornadoes, tornadoes they scare me to death. Do they take away your breath? If they do and you want to be safe tonight follow these rules and do what is right.

Rules:

1. Go inside your house.
2. Go into your basement or a place without windows.
3. Cover your head.

Angie, 5th Grade (2011-12)
St. Mary School, Erie County

Schools ~ Be Prepared ...

Have a school safety plan to prepare for high risk days, severe thunderstorms and tornado watches and warnings. In the plan, designate which faculty will monitor the NOAA Weather Radio or Public Alert Radio during watches and other severe weather events. Include provisions for all after-hour, school-related activities.

Have a backup source of information such as television, radio or the Internet.

In the plan, identify the personnel and method to disseminate all severe weather information to every classroom and activity. Have an alternate method to notify students and faculty, in case of power failure, such as a compressed air horn or megaphone.

Schools should be inspected to determine the best designation for protective areas. The most interior areas on the ground floor, away from windows and glass, are best for use as protective areas. Large, open rooms such as cafeterias, gymnasiums and auditoriums, or rooms with exterior or glass walls should never be used as protective areas or tornado shelters.

Modular and portable classrooms are also considered unsafe during tornadoes and thunderstorms. A school safety plan must include getting students out of portable classrooms and into a safe area in the main building as quickly as possible - preferably during a severe storm or tornado watch. Also, safety plans should allow faculty and students with disabilities to take cover early, before the arrival of impending severe weather.

Faculty and staff in charge of outdoor and after school activities should have access to a weather radio at all times. Ensure staff are knowledgeable of the school safety plan and know where the nearest tornado shelters/protective areas are located.

Prioritize areas within the school building by number of barrier walls, construction material, etc., as possible protective areas. Create a movement plan to fill the highest-rated areas first.

School Buses ~ Be Prepared ...

Establish guidelines for the use of school buses during tornado watches and warnings. All school buses should be equipped with radios for communicating important weather information. Delaying bus departures and diverting buses on routes are strategies for protecting drivers and riders.

School bus drivers should identify protective areas along each part of their routes where they and the students can take cover if overcome by a tornado or high winds (such as a store, another school or recreation center). Do not hesitate to take cover in ditches or other places below ground level.

- Do not stay in the school bus if caught in a tornado or high winds.
- Do not seek protection under an overpass or bridge.
- Do not attempt to outrun tornadoes or other severe weather.



AP File Photo

Wood County - School buses were tossed like toys when an EF4 tornado struck Millbury, Ohio late Saturday night, June 5, 2010. Seven people died as a result of the tornado. Lake High School (pictured) was destroyed.