

READYBORZOI

Much about tornadoes remains a mystery. They are rare, unpredictable, and deadly. The U.S. has more tornadoes annually (about 1,200) than anywhere else in the world.

TWISTER!

Be on the look out — tornado season is here

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On a spring afternoon, a dark, ominous storm drops down from the clouds. Tornado, twister or cyclone — by whatever name, few sights in nature are as terrifying. From now through June North Texas is the battleground where cold fronts and warm gulf moisture clash, spawning killer storms. More than 1,000 twisters strike the U.S. every year, about 130 in Texas, where they leave behind an average of eight dead and millions of dollars in damage. Here's what to watch and listen for.

TORNADO WARNING means conditions are favorable for the formation of tornadoes

TORNADO WATCH means a tornado has been spotted or detected on radar. Take cover.

ANATOMY OF A TORNADO-PRODUCING STORM

- ▶ Characteristic mushroom or anvil shape
- ▶ At ground level, flat, greenish cloud base
- ▶ Cylindrical "wall cloud" hangs down from cloud base
- ▶ Tornado shaft extends from wall cloud
- ▶ Hail and roar "like a freight train" may precede tornado

Labels: Anvil, Overshooting top (Dome), Precipitation, Cloud-base striations, Wall cloud, Shelf cloud, Southwest, Tornado, Northeast

BIRTH OF A TWISTER

- 1 Warm, moist air near the ground begins to rise.
- 2 As air rises, it encounters varying winds and begins to spiral.
- 3 At about 50,000 feet, the rising column hits a layer of warm air and stalls. Jet stream pushes it into a characteristic anvil shape.
- 4 Cooler air begins to descend back through the storm, eventually spreading outward at ground level.
- 5 Caught between downdraft and updraft, air begins to rotate horizontally. This spinning column gradually tilts downward and may become a tornado.

Labels: Rotating updraft, Anvil, Wind direction, Down-draft, Cool down-draft, Tornado, Warm updraft

THE FUJITA SCALE

Dr. Theodore Fujita, University of Chicago authority on destructive storms, rates twisters by their destructiveness:

- F0** Gale tornado (40-72 miles an hour); light damage, branches broken
- F1** Moderate tornado (73-112); roofs peeled off, mobile homes overturned
- F2** Significant tornado (113-157); Roofs torn off, mobile homes demolished, trees snapped
- F3** Severe tornado (158-206); Roofs, walls torn down, trains toppled
- F4** Devastating tornado (207-260); Well-built houses leveled, cars tossed through air
- F5** Incredible tornado (261-318); Homes carried long distances, steel-reinforced concrete structures badly damaged
- F6** Inconceivable tornado (319-379); total devastation

Boards ripped from buildings, other missiles, cause the most deaths.

Strong tornadoes lift railroad cars and autos.

TORNADO ALLEY

Spring weather conditions in the Texas-Oklahoma-Kansas-Nebraska corridor spawn more tornadoes than any other place in the world.

Labels: Cold air from north, Warm air from gulf, ROCKY MOUNTAINS, OKLAHOMA-TORNADO ALLEY, July-Sept, April-June, Jan.-March

WHAT YOU CAN DO AHEAD OF TIME

- ▶ Create a family emergency plan and make sure everyone understands it
- ▶ Have a battery-operated radio
- ▶ Make disaster kit with fresh batteries, bottled water, prescription drugs and first aid kit
- ▶ Check with engineer to make sure your home's roof and walls are firmly anchored to foundation
- ▶ Make special plans for the safety of the disabled in your family
- ▶ Build an in-home tornado shelter

AN INDOOR SHELTER

A small closet or bathroom near the center of your house can be converted to a shelter by doubling the existing studs and covering them with four layers of 3/4-inch plywood. A missile-resistant door, two layers of 3/4-inch plywood covered with 14-gauge sheet metal, will provide additional protection.

WHAT TO DO IN A TORNADO

- ▶ **In a car**, do not try to outrun a tornado. Leave your car and seek nearby shelter in a substantial building, or lie flat in a ditch or ravine
- ▶ **At home**, go to the basement or to an interior closet or bathroom, and take cover under heavy furniture or in the bathtub; stay away from windows

SEVEN TWISTER TIPS

1. Bring your pets inside. Designate a tornado-safe location for the entire family, including pets.
2. Keep emergency pet supplies and crates in a tornado-proof room or cellar.
3. Make sure that your dog is wearing a collar and identification that is up to date and visible at all times.

Increase the chances of being reunited with a lost pet by microchipping.

4. Practice getting your pets into the tornado-safe area.
5. If you must evacuate, take your pets and their emergency supplies with you. Even if you think you'll only be gone for a few hours, take your pets. You have no way of knowing how long you'll be kept out of the area, or prevented from seeing to your pets.
6. Following a tornado, only exit the home after you are certain the storm has passed. Keep pets secured while you assess the damage.
7. Watch for downed power lines and contaminated ground water.

WIRELESS EMERGENCY ALERTS



Do you have a WEA-capable device and is WEA available in your area? To find out and learn more, visit: <http://goo.gl/SmMk5j>

For more resources on preparedness visit: borzoiclubofamerica.org/readyborzoi. Comments or suggestions are welcomed! Please send to Veni Harlan, ReadyBorzoi chair, farfieldborzoi@mac.com.