

Preparing for Tornadoes

Prepare a Home Tornado Plan

Develop a safety plan for you and your family for home, work, school and when outdoors. Make sure you practice the plan. Review the plan on days when severe weather is forecast for your area.

- Pick a place where family members could gather if a tornado is headed your way. It could be your basement or, if there is no basement, a center hallway, bathroom or closet on the lowest floor. Keep this place uncluttered.
- Assemble a Tornado Safety Kit containing:
 - First aid kit and essential medications
 - Battery-powered radio, flashlight and extra batteries
 - Canned food and manual can opener
 - Bottled water
 - Sturdy shoes and work gloves
- Also include in the kit written instructions on how to turn off your home's utilities.
- Have a [NOAA Weather Radio](#) with a warning alarm tone and battery backup to receive updated forecasts and critical information such as watches and warnings.
- Keep a Virginia map handy to help you follow the movement of threatening storms from weather bulletins.

Responding to Tornadoes

Know What To Do

Stay tuned to your local radio or TV for weather reports, or listen to a NOAA weather radio for more detailed information when weather conditions are favorable for the formation of tornadoes.

When a tornado watch is issued:

- Tornadoes could develop in your area.
- Stay tuned to your local radio, TV or NOAA weather radio for further information and possible warnings.
- Be prepared to take cover if necessary.

When a tornado warning is issued:

- A tornado has been sighted or has been indicated by NWS Doppler radar.
- Warnings are given to individual counties or cities and include the tornado's location, direction and speed.
- If you are in or near its path, seek shelter immediately.

If a Tornado is Headed Your Way

Shelter immediately in the nearest substantial building. Go to the building's basement. If there is no basement, move to a small, windowless interior room such as a closet, bathroom or interior hall on the lowest level of the building. Be sure to use the stairs to reach the lowest level, not an elevator. Protect your body from flying debris with a heavy blanket or pillows.

Take precautions if you can not get to a substantial buildings. If you are in:

- **Open buildings** (shopping malls, gymnasiums or civic centers): Try to get into the restroom or an interior hallway. If there is no time to go anywhere else, seek shelter right where you are. Try to get up against something that will support or deflect falling debris. Protect your head by covering it with your arms.

- **Automobiles:** Get out of your vehicle and try to find shelter inside a sturdy building. A culvert or ditch can provide shelter if a substantial building is not nearby — lie down flat and cover your head with your hands. **Do not** take shelter under a highway overpass or bridge, because debris could get blown under them or the structures themselves could be destroyed.
- **Outdoors:** Try to find shelter immediately in the nearest substantial building. If no buildings are close, lie down flat in a ditch or depression and cover your head with your hands.
- **Mobile homes:** Do not stay in mobile homes. You should leave immediately and seek shelter inside a nearby sturdy building or lie down in a ditch away from your home, covering your head with your hands. Mobile homes are extremely unsafe during tornadoes.

NWR Station Listing for [Virginia](#)

Call Sign	Site Name	Site Location	Frequency	Power
KZZ28	Covesville	Mt. Oliver	162.450	1000
KJY86	Halifax	South Boston	162.450	1000
WXM57	Heathsville	Heathsville	162.400	1000
WXL92	Lynchburg	Madison Heights	162.550	1000
KHB36	Manassas	Independent Hill	162.550	1000
KHB37	Norfolk	Driver	162.550	1000
WXK65	Richmond	Sandston	162.475	1000
WXL60	Roanoke	Poor Mtn.	162.475	1000