

FDEP Tornado Safety Plan
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TORNADO SAFETY PLAN



DEP LABORATORIES

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL
PROTECTION

TALLAHASSEE, FLORIDA

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TORNADO SAFETY PROCEDURES

A **Tornado Watch** is issued to alert communities to the possibility of a tornado developing in their area. If a tornado watch is issued, staff should monitor local weather advisories, be alert to changing weather conditions and be prepared to take shelter immediately if conditions worsen.

A **Tornado Warning** is issued when Radar indicates rotation inside a thunderstorm and/or a reliable weather spotter reports a tornado. If a tornado warning is issued, staff should immediately take action by following the guidelines below. Tornadoes move quickly, so take action immediately.

- Danger signs of severe weather can include:
 - o Dark, often greenish sky;
 - o Large hail;
 - o A large, dark, low-lying cloud (particularly if rotating); and
 - o Loud roar, similar to a freight train.

The National Weather Service will issue a **Tornado Warning** when a tornado has been either seen by a weather spotter or when Doppler radar indicates strong rotation inside a thunderstorm. These warnings are issued with information concerning where the tornado is presently located and what communities are in the anticipated path of the tornado. Also, if you should sight a tornado approaching your building, you should inform your supervisor, who will then notify **BMC security desk at (245-8349) and DMS Building Manager's Office 488-3153.**

When a Tornado Warning is issued with the Bob Martinez Complex (BMC) in the immediate proximity or a tornado is sighted in the vicinity of the BMC, staff and any visitors must take immediate action. There is only one alarm sound (for fire) and it is associated with evacuation of the building, it will not be used for the tornado alert. Warnings for tornado will be passed by personal contact and the lab inner-com system. The Laboratory Safety Coordinator/Engineer or designees will notify the Chief Floor Wardens. The Chief Floor wardens will notify each section floor warden on their assigned floor to implement the Laboratory Complex Tornado Plan below. If time allows, a back-up email will be sent by the BMC Emergency Evacuation Coordinator to all groups in BMC Complex.

Employees and visitors (**no one is exempt**):

- Move away from windows and glass doorways by going to windowless offices or conference rooms on the floor you are on.
- Close all doors of window offices while moving to a windowless office.

- Do not use elevators because the power may fail, leaving you trapped.
- Close all doors of the interior room where you sought shelter. Protect your head and make yourself as small a target as possible by crouching down, preferably under a table or strong object.

Staff should move swiftly and in a calm, orderly fashion and remain in safe locations until the “all clear” has been given. Building security will notify Chief Floor Wardens who will notify floor wardens when the “all clear” is given. The floor wardens should then conduct a walk through their assigned areas to inform staff that the “all clear” has been given and to ensure that all areas are clear and safe.

If you are in:	Then:
The Building A structure	Go to a pre-designated area. This should be an interior room containing no windows or outside walls. Put as many walls as possible between you and the outside. Get under a sturdy table and use your arms to protect your head and neck. It is suggested that occupants should go to the stairwells.
Building B C & D	Go to designated stairwells, interior rooms, and mechanical chase way.
A vehicle	Get out immediately and go to the lowest floor of a sturdy, nearby building or a storm shelter. Mobile homes, even if tied down, offer little protection from tornadoes.
The outside with no shelter	Lie flat in a nearby ditch or depression and cover your head with your hands. Be aware of the potential for flooding. Do not get under an overpass or bridge. You are safer in a low, flat location. Never try to outrun a tornado in urban or congested areas in a car or truck. Instead, leave the vehicle immediately for safe shelter. Watch out for flying debris. Flying debris from tornadoes causes most fatalities and injuries so try to protect yourself from flying debris.

The Laboratory Emergency Evacuation Coordinator (or alternate) or the Deputy Director or designee will communicate the “all clear.” Tornado warnings can last for just a couple of minutes on up to 15 minutes or greater. Under no circumstances should anyone return to their workstation or attempt to travel until the all clear has been given.

Sample Tornado Warning Message for Staff:

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****Tornado Warning Message**** The National Weather Service has issued a **Tornado Warning** for your area. Please **take safety precautions immediately**.

Take immediate safety precautions now and notify everyone around you. Employees and visitors (no one is exempt) need to **immediately move to** your predetermined safe area, or **interior hallways, bathrooms, or a safe location/room without windows**. These actions require that we move swiftly and in a calm, orderly fashion and remain in these safe locations until the “all clear” has been given.

Sample All Clear Message:

****All Clear Message** All Clear.** The Tornado Warning for your area has expired. You may return to normal operations.