

# SAFETY NEWSLETTER

SELF INSURED WORKER'S COMPENSATION FUND MEMBERS

May 2019

## Severe Weather and Evacuation Tips for Office and Home

Tornadoes are the most erratic, most unpredictable and most violent of storms. They can happen anytime...anywhere, but are most common in Wyoming from May through September.

The tornado funnel may range from a few yards to nearly a mile in width. It may travel slowly or as fast as 60 mph. It may skip along or even make a U-turn. It may move along the ground a few hundred feet or several hundred miles.

Learn the difference between a Tornado Watch and a Tornado Warning:

### Tornado Watch:

- Indicates that conditions are right for a tornado to develop and that the sky should be watched. Be alert to changing weather conditions.

### Tornado Warning:

- Indicates a tornado has been sighted or that radar indicates one has developed or could develop within minutes. Warnings will give the location of the tornado and the area immediately affected by the warning. When a warning is issued, move quickly to shelter.

### Immediate Dangers:

- The immediate threat from tornadoes is danger to life and property from violently whirling winds and debris hurled through the air by the winds. Wind speeds in tornadoes can exceed 250 mph.

### Long-Term Dangers:

- Long-term risks include the possibility of building collapse, fallen trees and power lines, broken gas lines, broken sewer and water mains, and the outbreak of fires. Agricultural crops and industries may be damaged or destroyed.

### Straight-line Winds:

- Responsible for most thunderstorm wind damage
- Winds can exceed 100 mph!
- One type of straight-line wind, the downburst, can cause damage equivalent to a strong tornado and can be extremely dangerous to aviation.
- During the summer in the western states, thunderstorms often produce little rain but very strong wind gusts and dust storms.



### Thunder Storm Facts

- Thunderstorms affect relatively small areas when compared with hurricanes and winter storms.
- The typical thunderstorm is 15 miles in diameter and lasts an average of 30 minutes. Nearly 1,800 thunderstorms are occurring at any moment around the world. That's 16 million a year!
- Despite their small size, all thunderstorms are dangerous.
- Every thunderstorm produces lightning, which kills more people each year than tornadoes.
- Heavy rain from thunderstorms can lead to flash flooding.
- Strong winds, hail, and tornadoes are also dangers associated with some thunderstorms.

Of the estimated 100,000 thunderstorms that occur each year in the United States, only about 10 percent are classified as severe.

Your National Weather Service considers a thunderstorm severe if it produces hail at least 3/4-inch in diameter, wind 58 mph or higher, or tornadoes.

Take the time NOW to understand these dangers and learn basic safety rules!

### Lightning

- Occurs with ALL thunderstorms.
- Averages 93 deaths and 300 injuries each year.
- Causes several hundred million dollars in damage to property and forests annually.
- While the flashes we see as a result of a lightning strike travel at the speed of light (670,000,000 mph) an actual lightning strike travels at a comparatively gentle 270,000 mph.
- This means it would take about 55 minutes to travel to the moon, or around 1.5 seconds to get from London to Bristol.
- 1,400,000,000 strikes every year



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## Develop a Plan:

- Pick two places to meet: A spot outside your home for an emergency and a place away from your neighborhood in case you can't return home.
- Choose an out-of-state friend as your "family check-in contact" for everyone to call if the family gets separated.
- Discuss what you would do if advised to evacuate.
- Discuss the types of disasters that are most likely to happen. Explain what to do in each case.
- Plan on how to take care of your pets and livestock.
- Stock emergency supplies and assemble a Disaster Supplies Kit.
- Determine the best escape routes from your home. Find two ways out of each room.
- Working with neighbors can save lives and property.
- Meet with your neighbors to plan how the neighborhood could work together before, during and after a disaster until help arrives.
- Things to consider: Special skills (medical, technical), how to care for those with special needs (disabled or elderly), and child care in case the parents aren't home or can't get home.

## Practice and Maintain Your Plan:

- Quiz your kids every six months so they remember what to do.
- Conduct emergency drills at Home and Work.
- Replace stored water every 3 months and food every six months.
- Test and Check your Fire Extinguishers.
- Test your Smoke Detectors monthly.
- Check the batteries in your flash lights and in your radio at least once a year.

## Severe Weather Take Cover:

In the event life threatening weather conditions should develop, such as a Tornado a TORNADO WARNING shall be issued by via Radio/TV and the Your Counties Defense Warning System (3 minutes of steady wailing)

When this is heard please take cover in the Men's and Women's Restrooms until such time an all clear is sounded.

At the time of the warning, Please if you can gather your personal belongings. (like a purse ect...)

If any guest are in the building have them stay with you during the server weather condition.

If at all possible take a portable radio with you to stay informed of the weather or emergency.

Stay away from exposed areas such as windows or glass door ways at all times.

Please exit to the take cover areas and stay calm at all times, Make sure that some one in the office area does a final sweep to make sure all employees are accounted for.

Take role call so all employees are accounted for, during the emergency.

## Stratus Cloud



Thick (opaque) stratus clouds over central Michigan. This is an overcast cloud field, but there is some evidence of a transition to stratocumulus and partial clearing in the distance. Illustrate the variability of cloud fields, even locally.

## Cumulus Clouds



A classic convective cloud towering over its neighbors.

Under the right conditions, this cloud will grow into a cumulonimbus cloud - a thunderstorm.

## Cumulonimbus Cloud



This striking photograph was taken from an airplane window - good thing they decided to go around! It shows the classic "anvil" shape that a thunderstorm takes. This shape arises from the lifting of air in the cloud right up to the tropopause, at which point it cannot rise any more and spreads into the anvil.

