

The National Weather Service (NWS) North Platte, Nebraska has declared March 23rd through March 27th as Severe Weather Preparedness Week in Nebraska. Each day during the preparedness week will feature information about a different severe weather related topic.

Know what to do before, during and after a tornado.

Knowing what to do before, during and after a tornado could save your life. Here's what you need to know.

Before:

- Pick a tornado safe room in your home such as a basement, storm cellar or an interior room on the lowest floor with no windows.
- Make sure all members of your family know where to go.
- Store emergency supplies such as a first-aid kit and flashlights with extra batteries are stored there in case you need them.
- Put together a family communications plan.
- You should also identify a safe location at work or school.

During:

- When a Tornado Warning is issued, you should immediately go to a tornado safe room.
- If you are outside, you need to seek shelter inside a sturdy building.
- Mobile homes are never safe during a tornado. If you are in a mobile home or a recreational vehicle, you should head for a storm shelter.
- If you cannot quickly walk to a shelter immediately get into a vehicle, buckle your seat belt and try to drive to the closest sturdy shelter.

After:

- If you are in an area that was damaged, be careful of debris that may include sharp or dangerous objects and watch out for downed power lines and broken gas lines.
- Use battery-powered flashlights when examining buildings. Do NOT use candles which could start a fire.
- If you smell gas or hear a blowing or hissing noise, open a window and get everyone out of the building quickly and then call the gas company or fire department.
- Use the telephone only for emergency calls so rescue operation lines aren't tied up. Text your friends and family to let them know you're ok.
- If you were outside of the area damaged by the tornado, stay off the phone so that emergency calls can get through. Use text messages and social media to let your friends and family know you're ok.

- Stay away from areas that were damaged so you don't hamper rescue operations. Only return to areas that were damaged when local law enforcement gives the all-clear.

Visit www.weather.gov/om/severeweather for more information.