



Thunderstorm Safety



<http://www.weather.gov/om/severeweather>

Thunderstorms are a common occurrence across Nebraska, and if the right conditions exist, some will become severe. Recall that if a thunderstorm produces hail equal to or greater than one inch in diameter (quarter size), winds equal to or greater than 58 miles per hour, or a tornado, it is considered severe. Even though thunderstorms can and do occur at any time of the year, the most common time for thunderstorms, and especially severe thunderstorms, is during the spring, summer, and early fall.

There are many dangerous aspects of thunderstorms, severe or not, that pose a threat to life and property.

Lightning – Occurs with ALL thunderstorms.

Floods – Kills more people on average than any other severe weather hazard.

Straight-Line Winds – Can exceed 100 miles per hour and cause damage comparable to a tornado.

Large Hail – Causes millions of dollars each year in crop and property damage.

Tornadoes – Nature's most violent storm, with winds over 200 miles per hour possible.

Each year, many people are killed or seriously injured by tornadoes and severe thunderstorms despite advance warning. Some did not hear the warning, while others heard the warning but did not believe it would happen to them. The following preparedness information, combined with timely severe weather watches and warnings, could save your life. Once you receive a warning or observe threatening skies, **YOU** must make the decision to seek shelter before the storm arrives. It could be the most important decision you will ever make.

What do I do before the storm?

- **Develop a plan of action!** Be prepared for any hazard, and know where to go when severe weather strikes. Prior to severe weather season, make sure to identify a safe place to take shelter at home, work, school, and outdoors. Once you have a plan of action and a shelter identified, have frequent drills to ensure everyone knows what to do at all times.
- Know the name of the county where you live and the names of surrounding counties, cities, and landmarks. Warnings can be issued on a county basis and cities and landmarks will be named within the warning when possible.
- Learn your community's warning signals and evacuation plans.
- Check weather forecasts before leaving for extended periods outdoors.
- Keep a NOAA Weather Radio All-Hazards or an AM/FM radio with you, or bookmark your local National Weather Service website to get the latest weather information.
- Watch for signs of approaching storms, such as darkening skies, increasing winds, flashes of lightning, thunder, and static on your AM radio.