

Severe Thunderstorm Preparedness

This playbook outlines steps to prepare for severe thunderstorms, focusing on ensuring safety and minimizing the risk of damage from lightning and hail. It provides guidance on precautions to take before, during, and after a storm.

Step 1: **Stay Informed**

Monitor weather forecasts and alerts via television, radio, internet, or smartphone apps to stay informed about severe thunderstorm watches and warnings in your area.

Step 2: **Emergency Kit**

Prepare an emergency kit that includes essential items such as a flashlight, batteries, first aid supplies, water, and non-perishable food.

Step 3: **Secure Environment**

Ensure that your home and surroundings are secure. Trim trees, secure outdoor furniture, and close windows to minimize damage from hail and debris.

Step 4: **Electrical Safety**

Unplug electronic equipment before the storm to protect against power surges caused by lightning. Consider installing surge protectors.

Step 5: **Safe Shelter**

Identify the safest location in your home to shelter during the storm, away from windows and glass doors. Basements or small interior rooms on the lowest floor are preferable.

Step 6: **Avoid Water**

Refrain from using electrical appliances, running water, or taking baths/showers during a thunderstorm as lightning can travel through plumbing and electrical systems.

Step 7: **Check Alerts**

Continue to monitor emergency services or weather updates for changing conditions and guidance during the storm.

Step 8: **Wait Safely**

Remain in your safe location until you are certain the storm has passed, as there may be multiple rounds of thunder, lightning, and wind.

Step 9: **Assess Damage**

After the storm has cleared and it is safe to do so, inspect your property for any damage. Document any damage for insurance purposes.

Step 10: **Post-Storm Plan**

Implement a post-storm plan if necessary, including contacting family members, arranging for repairs, or seeking assistance from emergency services if there is significant damage or injury.

General Notes

Community Plan

Familiarize yourself with your community's severe weather emergency plan, including evacuation routes and shelters.

Charge Devices

Ensure that all battery-powered devices, such as cell phones and laptops, are fully charged in case of power outages.

Emergency Contacts

Keep a list of emergency contact numbers, including those of local shelters, utility companies, and family members, readily accessible.