



AFTER A SEVERE STORM

Injury can result directly from the tornado or severe storm, and can also occur after the tornado when people are walking among damaged or destroyed buildings. Tornadoes often damage power lines, gas lines, or electrical systems. Because of this, there is an increased risk of fire, electrocution, or explosion.⁵

- Continue to monitor your battery-powered radio or television for emergency information.
- Only enter severely damaged buildings after they have been inspected for structural integrity.
- Be careful when entering any structure that has been damaged.
- Wear sturdy shoes or boots, long sleeves, and gloves when handling or walking on or near debris.
- Safely work in teams if possible during cleanup efforts.
- Be aware of hazards from exposed nails and broken glass.
- Do not touch downed power lines or objects in contact with downed lines. Report electrical hazards to the police and the utility company.
- Use battery-powered lanterns, if possible, rather than candles to light homes without electrical power. If you use candles, make sure they are in safe holders away from curtains, paper, wood, or other flammable items. Never leave a candle burning when you are out of the room.
- Never use generators, pressure washers, grills, camp stoves, or other gasoline, propane, natural gas, or charcoal-burning devices inside your home, garage, or camper—or even outside near an open window, door, or vent as these generate carbon monoxide (CO). CO is an odorless, colorless gas that can cause sudden illness and death if you breathe in high concentrations of it. CO from these sources can build up in your home, garage, or camper and poison the people and animals inside. **Seek prompt medical attention if you suspect CO poisoning and are feeling dizzy, light-headed, or nauseated.**
- Hang up displaced telephone receivers that may have been knocked off by a tornado, but stay off the telephone, except to report an emergency.
- Cooperate fully with public safety officials.
- Respond to requests for volunteer assistance by police, firefighters, emergency management, and relief organizations, and do not go into damaged areas. Your presence could hamper relief efforts, and you could endanger yourself.
- Be aware of damaged areas that may have controlled access.



Wisconsin Department of Health Services

Division of Public Health

Climate and Health Program

P-01037c (Rev. 05/2019)