



GOALS

This safety session teaches employees to:

- Be aware of the wide variety of hazards of weather emergencies.
- Understand their company's emergency procedures and develop a similar home emergency plan.
- Be prepared to follow correct procedures to protect themselves, both at work and at home.

Applicable Regulations: 29 CFR 1910.38 (Emergency action plans)



1. Listen to radio or TV at least daily to be aware of weather warnings—and be prepared to take precautions that are advised.

- Most weather emergencies (except perhaps earthquakes) have at least a few minutes' warning, like tornadoes.
- For others, like hurricanes and blizzards, we are given notice days in advance, giving ample time to prepare.
- Many, if not most, weather-related casualties can be prevented by heeding warnings.

2. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) requires employers to have plans to deal with emergencies, including weather emergencies. (Instructor should have details.)

- Be sure you know the sound of the emergency alarm, any emergency duties assigned, the proper evacuation route, and the designated meeting place after evacuation.
- Be sure you know any company policy of notification to workers in case of a weather emergency.
- Be sure you know how to notify the company if you are unable to get to work because of a weather emergency.

3. Everyone should have a home emergency plan as well and make sure the whole family is familiar with it.

- Keep a kit stocked with food, water, and emergency supplies in case you lose power or are unable to leave the house.
- Post emergency numbers next to each phone, and teach children how and when to make an emergency call.
- Hold drills to exit the home quickly in an emergency.
- Agree on a family communication plan and a designated emergency meeting place outside the home.
- Keep your gas tank at least half full and have a car emergency kit stocked in case you get stranded on the road.

4. Different weather emergencies call for different responses.

- **Earthquakes:** If you're indoors, move away from windows, mirrors, chimneys, or shelves that could fall over. Get under strong furniture or to an inside corner of the building. If you're outside, move into an open area away from tall buildings, power poles, trees, or anything that could fall on you.



- **Floods:** Get out of the flood zone as quickly as possible, following a route that has no streams, storm drains, or roads that are already covered with water. If water stalls your car, leave it there and get to higher ground. If you're caught at home, go to a higher floor and take warm clothes, a flashlight, portable radio, and valuable papers, jewelry, etc. Wait for rescue; don't try to swim.
- **Hurricanes:** Evacuate inland if advised to do so over a planned route. Be alert to reports of roads blocked by downed trees or power lines. Assume downed power lines are live. If you stay in your home, move to the opposite side of the house from which the hurricane is coming. Stay away from windows.
- **Lightning:** You're less likely to be hit by lightning inside. Stay away from open doors and windows, fireplaces, and water sources, including faucets. If you're outside, try to get into a car or a building. If that's not possible, crouch on the ground in a low place—don't lie flat—or among low trees. Don't stand near a single tree, open water, or anything metal, such as fences, pipes, or machinery that could conduct electricity.
- **Snowstorms:** Dress in warm layers if you must go out. Be sure to cover your face and head. If you have to drive, clear snow off the whole car before you start. Take it much slower than usual and keep extra distance between you and the vehicle in front. If you get stuck in a blizzard, stay in your vehicle. Crack a window for ventilation. Turn the heater on every so often for warmth, but check periodically to make sure exhaust is not blocked.
- **Tornadoes:** Remember that a tornado watch means there's one coming and a warning means it's almost here. If you hear a tornado watch, plan what you will do. Don't get caught in a mobile home or car. You want to be in a solid building if at all possible. Once inside, stay away from doors, windows, and outer walls. Go to the center of the building and get under heavy upholstered furniture or into an interior windowless bathroom or closet. If you're caught outside in a tornado and can't get into a building, lie flat in a ditch and cover your head with your hands.



DISCUSSION POINTS:

- Discuss which weather emergencies are most likely to occur in your area.
- Ask your trainees for additional suggestions they have found useful for dealing with actual weather emergencies.



CONCLUSION:

You can't control the weather, but you can keep alert for weather warnings and follow the advice from radio or TV for keeping safe. You can avoid becoming a statistic if you take precautions to protect yourself.



TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE:

Have your employees take the Be Prepared for Weather Emergencies quiz. By testing their knowledge, you can judge their understanding of these dangers, proper emergency measures, and whether they need to review this important topic again soon.