



# Van Buren Township Residents: Be Severe Weather Ready



Put your family's safety first by pre-planning  
before severe weather strikes.

This message is from your Public Safety Director Gregory M. Laurain

## **Be Informed by**

- Visiting [www.ready.org](http://www.ready.org) or [www.weather.org](http://www.weather.org) for information on safety and preparedness
- Watching the skies
- Listening to NOAA weather radio
- Following radio and television newscasts for latest information on dangerous weather
- Sign up to receive wireless texts or email alerts for weather notification on your cell phone

## **Make a Plan**

- Have an emergency plan in place **before** severe weather strikes
- Discuss with family how to get to your designated safe place, which includes where to go and what to do)
- Locate shelter well in advance with family or friends
- Shelter in place as a last resort
  - Move to your basement or an interior room or hallway on the lowest level away from corner, windows, doors and outside walls
- Discuss how you will communicate with family and friends (cell, text, etc.)
- Know where to meet when the incident is over

**IMPORTANT: Neither Van Buren Public Schools nor Van Buren Township Hall are designated shelters for severe weather**

## **Build an Emergency Supply Kit**

- Put together an emergency supply kit with
  - Water (3 days worth per/person)
  - First aid kit essentials
  - Portable radio (batteries)
  - Flashlight (batteries)
  - Medications and other essentials
  - Have cash on hand, your IDs and a spare set of keys



## Severe Weather Definitions...

**Severe Thunderstorm Watch:** Thunderstorms with large hail and damaging winds are possible. Be prepared to move to safety if a Thunderstorm Warning is issued.

**Severe Thunderstorm Warning\*:** A thunderstorm with large hail and damaging winds had been reported or indicated by weather radar.

**Tornado Watch:** Tornadoes are possible in your area. Remain alert for approaching storms. Be prepared to move to safety if a Tornado Warning is issued. Know what counties are in the watch area by listening to the local radio, television or NOAA Weather Radio.

**Tornado Warning\*:** A tornado has been sighted or indicated by weather radar. Move to a place of safety immediately!

*\*Warning indicates imminent danger to life and property to those in the path of the storm!*

## Did you know that...

- 📌 According to the National Weather Service, there were four deaths and 31 injuries in Michigan from severe weather in 2011. All of the deaths and injuries resulted either from lightning or thunderstorm winds. Flooding severe thunderstorms and tornadoes were responsible for about \$150 million in damages in 2011.
- 📌 A funnel cloud is a column of violently rotating winds extending down from a thunderstorm; however, it does not touch the ground. A tornado is also a column of violently rotating winds that extends from a thunderstorm cloud that touches the surface of the earth.
- 📌 Most tornadoes occur between the months of May through August and in the late afternoon and evening hours; however, tornadoes can occur at any time of day or night throughout the year.

## Tornado Safety Before the Storm...

- 📌 Develop a plan for you and your family for home, work, school and outdoors. Know the safest shelter areas in multiple locations.
- 📌 Participate in *Michigan's Tornado and Severe Weather Awareness Week* and have frequent drills.
- 📌 Keep a disaster supply kit in your home including water, food that won't spoil and needs no heat to serve, a first aid kit, NOAA Weather Radio (also known as an Emergency Weather Radio,) a flashlight and special items for children and elderly family members.

## Tornado Safety at Home, Work or at Play...

- 📌 In a home or building, avoid windows. Move to a basement and get under a sturdy table or the stairs. A specially constructed "safe room" within a building offers the best protection. FEMA



(the Federal Emergency Management Agency) has more information about safe rooms available at <http://www.fema.gov/plan/prevent/saferoom/>.

- 📌 If a basement is not available, move to a small interior room or hallway on the lowest floor and cover yourself with anything close at hand: towels, blankets, and pillows. If possible, get under a sturdy table, desk or counter. Put as many walls as possible between you and the storm.
- 📌 If caught outdoors, seek shelter in a sturdy building. If you cannot quickly walk to a shelter, but you're near your vehicle, buckle your seat belt and drive to the closest sturdy shelter. If flying debris occurs while you are driving, pull over and park. Now you have two options as a last resort:
  - Stay in the vehicle with the seat belt on and place your head below the windows.
  - If you can safely get noticeably lower than the roadway, exit the vehicle and lie in that area, covering your head with your hands. Do not seek shelter under an overpass.
- 📌 Mobile homes, even if tied down, offer little protection from tornadoes. You should leave a mobile home and go to the designated storm shelter or the lowest floor of a sturdy nearby building.
- 📌 If at school, follow the tornado drill procedures: Go to the interior hall or room. Crouch low, head down, and protect the back of your head with your arms. Stay away from windows and large open rooms like gyms and auditoriums.

