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Advancing Georgia's Counties.



GEORGIA  
MUNICIPAL  
ASSOCIATION

February 2017

Local Government Risk Management Services, Inc.

# Safety Theme

A Service Organization of the Association County Commissioners of Georgia and the Georgia Municipal Association

The Safety Theme program is designed to help you get an important safety message across to all employees in a simple-to-use format that can be completed each month.

## Monthly Theme Poster

Make copies, and post them wherever you will get the most impact.

## Safety Theme Article

The article expands on the poster message for the month. Make copies and hand them out to each meeting participant.

## Participant Sign-In Sheet

Use the sign-in sheet to document your safety training.

## Suggested Agenda for the Monthly Safety Meeting

- Assemble the participants.
- Hand out copies of the article and pass around the sign-in sheet.
- Read the Safety Theme aloud.
- Discuss aspects of the theme relevant to the department, with examples. Ask for ideas and encourage participation.



Photo: Torrey Wiley

## Training Calendar

### Health Promotion Champion

September 20	Tifton, Tift County
September 21	Statesboro, Bulloch County
September 26	Macon, Bibb County
September 27	Cartersville, Bartow County
September 28	Gainesville (Civic Center)

### Health Promotion Leader II

March 21	Tifton, Tift County
March 22	Statesboro, Bulloch County
March 23	Macon, Bibb County
March 28	Cartersville, Bartow County
March 29	Gainesville (Civic Center)

### Local Gov. Safety Coordinator 2

February 23	Tifton, Tift County
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### Local Gov. Safety Coordinator 3

February 28	Cornelia, Habersham County
March 2	Cartersville, Bartow County
March 7	Macon, Bibb County
March 9	Statesboro, Bulloch County
March 14	Tifton, Tift County

### Personnel Liability Seminar

April 18	Cornelia, Habersham County
May 3	Cartersville, Bartow County
May 25	Macon, Bibb County
June 6	Tifton, Tift County
June 15	Statesboro, Bulloch County

### Work Zone Safety

April 27	Cartersville, Bartow County
May 11	Macon, Bibb County
May 23	Statesboro, Bulloch County
June 8	Tifton, Tift County

# Safety Bulletin

## Be Alert for Tornadoes



***Know the Signs  
Know What to Do***

# Joint Statement on Tornado Safety by the American Red Cross and the National Weather Service

*Editor's Note: Tornado season does not traditionally start for several months, yet already this year we have had destructive storms that have devastated communities and families struggling with the loss of life of a loved one. This joint statement from the NWS and Red Cross, originally issued in 2009, is still pertinent to 2017.*

The National Weather Service and the American Red Cross share a common goal of protecting lives through public education. Regarding tornado safety, we both agree that the best options are to go to an underground shelter, basement or safe room. We have been giving this advice for decades, and it is recognized as the most effective way to stay safe in a tornado.

The National Weather Service and Red Cross also agree on the critical importance of preparedness and quick action when conditions are right for tornadoes to develop like during a severe thunderstorm warning or tornado watch. When a tornado warning is issued, immediate action is required. Preparedness begins by identifying a safe location well in advance of any severe weather and having a way to get weather alerts wherever you are, such as from a NOAA weather radio. When a watch or warning is broadcast, people should already have a plan on what to do and where to go. They should take action immediately and never wait until they actually see a tornado.

The National Weather Service and the Red Cross continue to agree that if no underground shelter or safe room is available, the safest alternative is a small windowless interior room or hallway on the lowest level of a sturdy building, such as an interior bathroom. We also recommend that residents of mobile homes go to the nearest sturdy building or shelter if a tornado threatens.

The Red Cross and Weather Service believe that if you are caught outdoors, you should seek shelter in a basement, shelter or sturdy building. If you cannot quickly walk to a shelter:

- Immediately get into a vehicle, buckle your seat belt and try to drive to the closest sturdy shelter.
- If flying debris occurs while you are driving, pull over and park.

Now you have the following options as a last resort:

- Stay in the car with the seat belt on. Put your head down below the windows, covering with your hands and a blanket if possible.
- If you can safely get noticeably lower than the level of the roadway, exit your car and lie in that area, covering your head with your hands.

Your choice should be driven by your specific circumstances.

The important thing to understand is that if you find yourself outside or in a car with a tornado approaching and you are unable to get to a safe shelter, you are at risk from a number of things outside your control, such as the strength and path of the tornado and debris from your surroundings. This is the case whether you stay in your car or seek shelter in a depression or ditch, both of which are considered last resort options that provide little protection. The safest place to be is in an underground shelter, basement or safe room.

Dated: June 22, 2009

## Tornadoes

Although tornadoes occur in many parts of the world, they are found most frequently in the United States. In an average year, 1,200 tornadoes cause 60-65 fatalities and 1,500 injuries nationwide. You can find more information on tornadoes at [www.spc.noaa.gov](http://www.spc.noaa.gov).

## Tornado Facts

A tornado is a violently rotating column of air extending from a cumuloform cloud, such as a thunderstorm, to the ground.

- Tornadoes may appear nearly transparent until dust and debris are picked up or a cloud forms within the funnel. The average tornado moves from southwest to northeast, but tornadoes can move in any direction and can suddenly change their direction of motion.
- The average forward speed of a tornado is 30 mph but may vary from nearly stationary to 70 mph.
- The strongest tornadoes have rotating winds of more than 200 mph.
- Tornadoes can accompany tropical storms and hurricanes as they move onto land.
- Waterspouts are tornadoes that form over warm water. Water spouts can move onshore and cause damage to coastal areas.
- Tornadoes can occur at any time of day, any day of the year.

Have a plan of action before severe weather threatens. You need to respond quickly when a warning is issued or a tornado is spotted.

When conditions are warm, humid, and windy, or skies are threatening, monitor for severe weather watches and warnings by listening to NOAA Weather Radio, logging onto [weather.gov](http://weather.gov) or tuning in to your favorite television or radio weather information source.

[www.spc.noaa.gov/efscale/](http://www.spc.noaa.gov/efscale/)

## Tornado Fiction and Fact

Fiction: Lakes, rivers, and mountains protect areas from tornadoes.

Fact: No geographic location is safe from tornadoes. A tornado near Yellowstone National Park left a path of destruction up and down a 10,000 foot mountain.

Fiction: A tornado causes buildings to “explode” as the tornado passes overhead.

Fact: Violent winds and debris slamming into buildings cause the most structural damage.

Fiction: Open windows before a tornado approaches to equalize pressure and minimize damage.

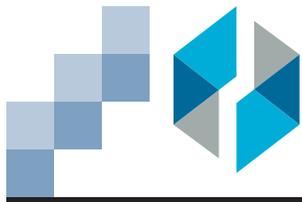
Fact: Virtually all buildings leak. Leave the windows closed. Take shelter immediately. An underground shelter, basement, or safe room are the safest places. If none of those options are available, go to a windowless interior room or hallway.

Fiction: Highway overpasses provide safe shelter from tornadoes.

Fact: The area under a highway overpass is very dangerous in a tornado. If you are in a vehicle, you should immediately seek shelter in a sturdy building. As a last resort, you can either: stay in the car with the seat belt on. Put your head down below the windows, covering with your hands and a blanket if possible, OR if you can safely get noticeably lower than the level of the roadway, exit your car and lie in that area, covering your head with your hands. Your choice should be driven by your specific circumstances.

FICTION: It is safe to take shelter in the bathroom, hallway, or closet of a mobile home.

FACT: Mobile homes are not safe during tornadoes! Abandon your mobile home to seek shelter in a sturdy building immediately. If you live in a mobile home, ensure you have a plan in place that identifies the closest sturdy buildings.



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***Tornado Safety***



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