

FEMA Responds to Tornado Outbreak

Multiple states were affected by an outbreak of tornadoes Friday night. FEMA is monitoring to meet the needs of survivors as well as state, local and tribal governments and is actively coordinating with affected states to address unmet needs.

FEMA Administrator Deanne Criswell [spoke with Kentucky Gov. Beshear](#) to ensure the state has all federal resources necessary as they continue search and rescue efforts following these devastating tornadoes.

FEMA Response Actions

- Two FEMA Incident Management Assistance Teams are en route to Kentucky to assist with federal coordination efforts.
- Damage assessment teams, additional staff and resources are positioned and ready to deploy to Kentucky or any other affected areas.
- FEMA is in contact with state emergency management officials as tornado damage reports come in from Arkansas, Illinois, Kentucky, Missouri and Tennessee.

Staying Weather Aware and Safe Before, During and After Tornadoes

Residents from east-central Mississippi to extreme southwestern Virginia should stay vigilant as this storm system moves east. Damaging wind gusts and a few tornadoes will be possible, mainly early in the day. Isolated strong wind gusts cannot be ruled out over parts of the Mid-Atlantic during the late afternoon and evening.

In any emergency, always follow the instructions given by state, local or tribal emergency management officials.

Follow these tips to stay safe after a tornado.

- Stay out of the area if possible. Emergency workers may be assisting people or cleaning up debris. You can help them by staying off the roads and out of the way.
- Enter areas that have sustained damaged **only** after your local officials have said it is safe to do so. Always follow the direction of your local officials.
- If you suspect any damage to your home, shut off the electrical power, natural gas and propane tanks to avoid fire, electrocution or explosions, if you know how to do so safely.
- Do not touch downed power lines or any objects that are in contact with downed lines. If you see a downed power line or other electrical hazard, report it to the police and the utility company.



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- If you see frayed wiring or sparks, or if there is an odor of something burning, you should immediately shut off the electrical system at the main circuit breaker if you have not done so already.
- If you smell gas or suspect a leak, turn off the main gas valve, open all windows and leave the house immediately. Notify the gas company, the police or fire departments, or State Fire Marshal's office. Do not turn on the lights, light matches, smoke or do anything that could cause a spark. Do not return to your house until your local officials say it is safe to do so.
- Be careful when cleaning up. Wear protective clothing, including a long-sleeved shirt, long pants, work gloves and sturdy thick-soled shoes. Do not try to remove heavy debris by yourself. Use an appropriate mask if cleaning mold or other debris. People with asthma and other lung conditions and/or immune suppression should not enter buildings with indoor water leaks or mold growth that can be seen or smelled. Children should not take part in disaster cleanup work.

Avoid Carbon Monoxide Poisoning:

If you lost power, avoid carbon monoxide poisoning and fires.

- Use a Generator Safely! Never use a generator inside a home, basement, shed or garage, even if doors and windows are open. Keep generators far away from windows, doors and vents that could allow carbon monoxide to come indoors.
- Grills, camp stoves or other gasoline, propane, natural gas or charcoal burning devices should never be used inside a home, garage, basement, crawlspace or any partially enclosed area. These should only be used outdoors and at least 20 feet away from windows.
- Never use a gas stovetop or oven to heat your home.
- For additional safety tips before, during or after a tornado visit [Ready.gov/tornadoes](https://www.ready.gov/tornadoes).

Contact Us

If you have any questions, please contact FEMA's Office of External Affairs:

- Congressional Affairs at (202) 646-4500 or at FEMA-Congressional-Affairs@fema.dhs.gov
- Intergovernmental Affairs at (202) 646-3444 or at FEMA-IGA@fema.dhs.gov
- Tribal Affairs at (202) 646-3444 or at FEMA-Tribal@fema.dhs.gov
- Private Sector Engagement at (202) 646-3444 or at nbeoc@max.gov

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Also, follow Administrator Deanne Criswell on Twitter [@FEMA_Deanne](#).

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Helping people before, during, and after disasters.