

Severe Weather Events

Some 75 million Americans are under threat of severe weather today. Residents from the Great Lakes to the Gulf Coast, and from the Midwest to the East Coast, are advised to keep alert and stay informed. The first two days of this very intense spring storm system have already claimed nearly 30 lives in six states. We have compiled this special newsletter to help anyone who has been, or may be, affected by these terrible storms.

The following are news outlets and organizations with current news, updates, and helpful information:

[Weather.com \(live updates\)](#)

[CNN](#)

[Google Public Alerts](#)

[Ready.gov](#)

[American Red Cross \(tornado preparedness app\)](#)

Tornado Response and Recovery

In the aftermath of a tornado, workers may be involved in a variety of response and recovery operations. The following are general guidelines that may be applicable to workers involved in assessing and/or cleaning up the damage to their worksite. However, some operations, such as utility restoration, cleaning up spills of hazardous materials, and search and rescue, should only be conducted by workers who have the proper training, equipment, and experience.

Potential Hazards

Response and recovery work in tornado-impacted areas presents safety and health hazards that should be properly identified, evaluated, and controlled in a systematic manner to reduce or eliminate occupational safety and health risks to response and recovery workers. Some of the specific hazards associated with working in the aftermath of tornadoes include:

- Hazardous driving conditions due to slippery and/or blocked roadways
- Slips and falls due to slippery walkways
- Falling and flying objects such as tree limbs and utility poles
- Sharp objects including nails and broken glass
- Electrical hazards from downed power lines or downed objects in contact with power lines
- Falls from heights
- Burns from fires caused by energized line contact or equipment failure
- Exhaustion from working extended shifts
- Heat and dehydration

General Precautions

- Continue to monitor your local radio or television stations for emergency information and the potential of additional storms. Be aware of possible structural, electrical, or gas-leak hazards.
- If such hazards are identified, report them to the proper local authorities and/or utility.
- Do not touch downed power lines or objects in contact with downed power lines.
- Wear proper clothing when walking on or near debris, including boots and gloves.
- Be careful around sharp objects, including nails and broken glass.
- Use the proper safety precautions when operating generators, chainsaws, or other power tools.
- Take steps to prevent heat illnesses and dehydration.

See the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) [website](#) for additional precautions to take after a tornado.

Fact Sheets and Quick Cards

OSHA has the following materials to assist employers with assessing and controlling the hazards common to most response and recovery work in tornado-impacted areas.

[Search and Rescue](#) (PDF*)

[Portable Generator Safety](#) (PDF*)

[Chain Saw Safety](#) (PDF*) | [Español](#) (PDF*)

[Demolition and Cleanup](#) (PDF*)

[Work Zone Traffic Safety](#) (PDF*)

[Downed Electrical Wires](#) (PDF*)

[Heat Stress](#) (PDF*)

For more information, see other [Emergency Response Resources](#) from the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) or for a full list of related materials, see the [Additional Resources](#) page.

[OSHA.gov](#)

Additional Resources

For more preparedness and recovery information please use the following links:

[Tornado Resources](#)

[General Storm Preparedness](#)

[Helping with the Relief Effort](#)