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Tornadoes: Spring with a Twist

Tornadoes are one of nature's most violent storms and can cause death, injury, and destruction in seconds. A Tornado appears as a rotating, funnel shaped cloud that extends from a thunderstorm to the ground with whipping winds that can reach 300 miles per hour. According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) an average of 1,000 tornadoes are reported nationwide every year. Tornado intensity is measured on the Fujita Scale (EF), which rates tornados on a scale of 0-5 based on the amount and type of wind damage. An EF-0 is light damage and an EF-5 is incredible damage.

The United States experiences more tornados than any other country. According to the most recent data (2015) Texas ranks number 1 amongst states for the number of tornadoes to touch down annually. In 2015 Texas reported 228 tornadoes whereas number 2 on the list, Kansas, reported 178. In 2015 insured losses from U.S. tornadoes/thunderstorms totaled \$9.6 billion, which was down from \$12.3 billion in 2014.

Tornadoes can strike in any season, but occur most often in Spring and Summer months. They can occur at any time of day or night, but are most common between the hours of 3pm and 9pm. As of March 6, 2017 NOAA has logged 299 reported tornadoes. That is more than double the 2005-2015 average of 133 by the same time. Many Central and South Central Texans found out how devastating tornadoes can be on the morning of February 20th. The Austin and San Antonio areas had a confirmed 6 tornadoes touch down. They varied in size, with the largest being an EF2.

Below are some tips on what to do if you find yourself in the path of a tornado:

- **Look for danger signs: dark, often greenish skies, a large, dark, low lying cloud, large hail, and a loud roar similar to a freight train.**
- **Seek shelter immediately**
- **Stay away from all windows**
- **Avoid upper floors of buildings, auditoriums, gymnasiums, trailers and parked vehicles**
- **Go to the center of a small interior room on the lowest level (closet, interior hallway) away from corners, windows, doors, and outside walls. Put as many walls as possible between you and the outside.**
- **If you are out in the open, lie flat in a ditch or other low-lying area and protect your head, stay away from poles and overhead power lines**
- **Know the difference between a watch and a warning. A watch means that conditions are favorable for a tornado to form, and warning means that a tornado has been spotted in your area and you should take shelter immediately.**
- **If you find yourself in a manufactured home or office, get out immediately and go to a pre-identified location such as the lowest floor of a sturdy nearby structure or a storm shelter.**

Tornadoes are no laughing matter, they are unpredictable and can drop from the sky in an instant. It is vital that you pay attention to tornado warnings and seek shelter immediately. If you ever get to see first-hand the path of destruction that a tornado leaves behind, I would be willing to bet that you would pay a little closer attention to the weather alerts that your phone sends out at 3 in the morning. Until next time my friends, be prepared and stay safe.

April 2017

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2	3	4 SAMA Lunch	5 IFMA Luncheon	6 ACA Luncheon	7	8
9	10	11 SACA Luncheon	12 AAFAME Luncheon	13 Austin BOMAGolf	14	15
16	17	18	19 IREM/SA BOMA Luncheon AASMOCA Social	20 SAABE Luncheon	21 ----FIWT Austin	22 -Mid Year Expo--
23	14	25	26	27 IWSA Luncheon CAMO Trade Fair	28	29

- Events**
- April 4: SAMA Luncheon
 - April 5: IFMA Luncheon
 - April 6: ACA Luncheon
 - April 11: SACA Luncheon
 - April 12: AAFAME Luncheon
 - April 13: Austin BOMA Golf
 - April 19: IREM/BOMA Luncheon
 - April 19: AASMOCA Social
 - April 20: SAABE Luncheon
 - April 21-22: FIWT Mid Year Expo
 - April 27: IWSA Luncheon
 - April 27: CAMO Trade Fair

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