



Tornado

Fact Sheet

Are we at risk?

In recent years, southern Maryland has experienced several tornados, including one that was considered to be in the ranks of the strongest twisters on earth. There are 6 levels of intensity for tornados; these levels are determined by using the following guidelines, known as the *Fujita scale*.

Scale of Intensity	
Category	Wind Speed (mph)
F0	40-72
F1	73-112
F2	113-157
F3	158-206
F4	207-260
F5	261-318



One of the series of powerful tornados that touched down here in southern Maryland is illuminated by lightening in April of 2002.

How to Protect Yourself:

TORNADO WATCH: Tornados are possible.

- Tune into local radio and television for updates.
- Be alert for sudden changes in weather.

TORNADO WARNING: A tornado has been sighted.

- If you are inside, go to a **shelter area**. (see below)
- If you are outside, go to the basement of a nearby building or lie flat in a ditch or low-lying area. It is not a good idea to take shelter under a bridge.
- If you are in a car or mobile home, get out immediately and take shelter as described above.

Shelter Area Tips

A shelter area could be a basement, storm cellar, or the lowest building level. Find a room that puts as many walls between you and the outside as possible. Get under a sturdy table and protect your head and neck with your arms.

For more information:

- St. Mary's County Health Department- 301-475-4330
- American Red Cross, Southern Maryland Chapter- 1-888-276-2767