

After a Tornado

- Watch out for fallen power lines and stay out of the damaged area.
- Listen to the radio for information and instructions.
- Use a flashlight to inspect your home for damage; do not use candles at any time.

Preparing a Safe Room

The purpose of a safe room or a wind shelter is to provide a space where you and your family can seek refuge that provides a high level of protection. You can build a safe room in one of several places in your home, including your basement, atop a concrete slab-on-grade foundation or garage floor, or in an interior room on the first floor.

- To protect its occupants, a safe room must be built to withstand high winds and flying debris, even if the rest of the residence is severely damaged or destroyed.
- The safe room must be adequately anchored to resist overturning and uplift.
- The walls, ceiling, and door of the shelter must withstand wind pressure and resist penetration by windborne objects and falling debris.
- Below-ground safe rooms must be designed to avoid accumulating water during the heavy rains that often accompany severe windstorms.
- The connections between all parts of the safe room must be strong enough to resist the wind.
- Sections of either interior or exterior residence walls that are used as walls of the safe room must be separated from the structure of the residence so that damage to the residence will not cause damage to the safe room.
- Additional information about safe rooms available from FEMA: **Taking Shelter from the Storm: Building a Safe Room Inside Your House** (FEMA-320) is a manual with detailed information about how to build a wind-safe room to withstand tornado, hurricane and other high winds.

The Recovery Process

- For direct assistance to individuals' and families' immediate needs contact the American Red Cross or other local voluntary agencies.
- Check newspapers, television, or radio news for information on available disaster assistance.
- If you have property damage, contact your insurance company as soon as possible.
- For information on helping children deal with disaster, visit www.fema.gov or get a copy of FEMA 478 **Helping Children Cope with Disaster**. To obtain other fact sheets and publications call the FEMA publications warehouse at 1-800-480-2520. You can also visit DHS' www.ready.gov.

Dangerous Tornado Myth!	The Facts:
Open windows equalize pressure and minimize damage.	Opening windows does not affect wind pressure but will allow damaging winds to enter the structure. The best course of action is to close the windows and immediately go to a safe place.