



Tips to prepare for a severe weather, including tornado outbreaks:

Before a tornado event:

- Identify a room or area suitable enough for staff, volunteers and, if possible, animals, to take shelter from the tornado. If your facility has a lower level or basement that would be adequate or even an interior room within the facility, away from windows.
- It is important to regularly practice getting everyone into the room if you can. It is advisable to also practice bringing as many animals as you can as quickly as possible into the room as well to try and maximize lifesaving efforts.
- Consider placing collars or microchipping animals with your organization's contact information in the event of separation.
- Develop an essential supplies kit that you can easily access should you need to evacuate. The kit should consist of items for both humans and animals such as, hand-crank or battery-operated flashlights and radio, leashes, muzzles, foldable crates or even pillowcases for cats, pet and human first aid kits, etc., in the event you can evacuate with any of the animals. *Identify the local emergency radio station call number to get the latest updates on the storm's track.*

During severe weather that may cause tornadoes:

- Identify actions you need to take in your organization's emergency plan. If a plan for your organization does not yet exist, follow the steps in the [Best Friends Emergency Preparedness Toolkit](#) to get started.
- During a tornado watch for your area, if evacuation is possible, access your essential kit and utilize the time that you have to gather people and animals and find somewhere safe to take cover.
- If evacuation is not possible, try to place any smaller animals in crates and under sturdy pieces of furniture like heavy desks or tables, or even windowless bathrooms or closets.
- During a tornado warning, take immediate cover and wait out for the storm to pass. Utilize your radio and tune into your emergency radio channel to hear updates.

After a tornado event:

- Remain cautious when venturing outside to assess damage. Gas and power lines may be down and can add a secondary hazard to humans and animals.
- Depending on where the tornado touched down and the level of impact left in its wake, you may need to search for some lost animals that were displaced by the event. Hopefully, your animals are microchipped or collared with information, but if not, start alerting members in the community to be on the lookout for any missing animals from your facility.
- Be mindful that there may be secondary challenges such as long-lasting power outages in your area as a result. Follow the [tip sheet on power outages](#) to learn more.