



KENDALL COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Public Service Announcement

WWW.KENDALLHEALTH.ORG

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Prepare Now for Severe Springtime Weather

Springtime doesn't only bring flowers; it can bring severe weather. In the U.S., the Midwest and the Southeast have a greater risk for tornadoes. Tornadoes are powerful rotating columns of air that extend from a thunderstorm to the ground. Tornadoes can; happen anytime and anywhere; bring intense winds, over 200 MPH; and look like funnels.

Before a tornado, establish a safe zone in your home and make sure everyone knows where to go for shelter. Sign up for your community's warning systems. If your community has sirens, then become familiar with the warning tone.

Tornadoes vary greatly in their appearance and can occur with little or no warning. It is important to know the signs that a tornado could be imminent. Signs include; a dark, often greenish sky, a wall cloud, particularly if it is rotating, large hail, which is often produced by the same storms that produce tornadoes, and a loud roar, similar to the sound of a freight train. It is important to know that tornadoes may occur and be visible near the trailing edge of a thunderstorm or may also be embedded in rain and not visible.

A tornado *watch* means that weather conditions are favorable for tornadoes and a tornado *warning* means one has been spotted in your area. If you are under a tornado warning, find safe shelter right away. If you can safely get to a sturdy building, then do so immediately. Go to a safe room, basement, or storm cellar. If you are in a building with no basement, then get to a small interior room on the lowest level. Stay away from windows, doors, and outside walls. Do not get under an overpass or bridge. You're safer in a low, flat location. Watch out for flying debris that can cause injury or death. Use your arms to protect your head and neck.

Taking an active role in your safety today will assist in your response when severe weather is approaching. For more information on emergency preparedness for [elders](#) and [pets](#), please click images below. You may also visit www.kendallhealth.org or call (630)553-9100 to learn more.

Caring for Elders during an Emergency

The health of older adults may decline during emergencies due to multiple factors. Older adults often have more chronic conditions than other age groups, the treatment of which may require daily medications, specialized equipment, and care coordination. Sensory, physiological, and cognitive changes that may occur in the normal course of aging can also make it more difficult for older adults to cope with disaster situations such as extreme temperatures or noisy, crowded shelters. Understanding potential color vision needs and medical concerns is important in order to appropriately plan for these issues before an emergency event.

Prepare NOW

- Make sure their supplies are well-stocked. This includes both food and prescriptions they may need.
- Inspect the house. Start by identifying potential hazards such as dead tree limbs, outside plumbing that's missing insulation, and debris in the gutters. Continue to inspect the outside furnace vents, ensuring that they are clear.
- Arrange for Care. Contact someone ahead of time to clear the driveway and sidewalk. One of the neighbors may be willing to check in on your relative, and let you know they are still doing okay.
- Have a back-up plan in case the power goes out. If your relative uses an oxygen concentrator or a CPAP machine, it's always a good idea to have a generator at their home to keep the machines to continue on in the event of a power outage. Make sure your generator has working fuel tanks and plenty of batteries.
- Learn the signs and basic treatments for, heatstroke and hypothermia.

Planning for Your Pet

If you leave your pets behind, they may be lost, injured - or worse. Never leave a pet chained outdoors. Plan options include:

- Create a buddy system in case you're not home. Ask a trusted neighbor to check on your animals.
- Identify shelters. For public health reasons, many emergency shelters cannot accept pets.
- Find pet-friendly hotels along your evacuation route and book a room in your pet's emergency kit or visit www.pettravel.com.
- Locate boarding facilities or animal hospitals near your evacuation shelter.
- Consider an out-of-town friend or relative.
- Locate a veterinarian or animal hospital in the area where you may be seeking temporary shelter, in case your pet needs medical care. Add the contact information to your emergency kit.
- Have your pet microchipped and make sure that you not only keep your address and phone number up-to-date, but that you also include contact info for an emergency contact outside of your immediate area.
- If you are unable to return to your home right away, you may need to board your pet. Find out where pet boarding facilities are located.
- Most boarding facilities, veterinarians and animal shelters will need your pet's medical records to make sure all are updated and current.
- If you have no alternative but to leave your pet at home, there are some pre-emptive measures you can take to minimize the impact your pet will have when you return.

A basic emergency supply kit could include:

- **Food.** At least a three-day supply in an airtight, waterproof container.
- **Water.** At least three days of water specifically for your pets.
- **Medicines and medical records.**
- **Important documents.** Registration information, adoption papers and vaccination documents. Talk to your veterinarian about microchipping and enrolling your pet in a recovery database.
- **First aid kit.** Cotton bandage rolls, bandage tape and scissors, antiseptic ointment, flea and tick prevention, latex gloves, isopropyl alcohol and saline solution. Including a pet first aid reference book is a good idea too.
- **Collar or harness with ID tag, rabies tag and a leash.**
- **Crates or pet carrier.** Have a sturdy, safe crate or carrier in case you need to evacuate. The carrier should be large enough for your pet to stand, turn around and lie down.
- **Sanitation.** Pet litter and litter box if appropriate, newspapers, paper towels, plastic trash bags and household chlorine bleach.
- **A picture of you and your pet together.** If you become separated, a picture of you and your pet together will help you document ownership and allow others to assist you. Add species, breed, age, sex, color and distinguishing characteristics.
- **Family items.** Familiar items, such as treats, toys and bedding can help reduce stress for your pet.

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