

FEMA Urges Preparedness Ahead Multi-Day Severe Weather Outbreak; Extremely Critical Fire Weather Conditions

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WASHINGTON -- A multi-day severe weather outbreak is expected in the Mississippi Valley into the Lower Ohio Valley this afternoon into Saturday and through the Central Gulf Coast states on Saturday.

The National Weather Service Storm Prediction Center upgraded the threat of widespread damaging winds, large hail and a strong tornado threat across portions of Missouri and Illinois.

A tornado outbreak is possible on Saturday across central Gulf Coast states and deep south into the Tennessee Valley. Areas in eastern Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama could experience strong, long-track tornadoes Saturday afternoon and evening.

Additionally, strong winds, low relative humidity and dry conditions will bring extremely critical fire weather conditions to the Southern Plains today. A wildfire outbreak is possible today across the Southern Plains as extremely critical fire weather conditions spread from the Texas Panhandle, North-Central Texas and into much of Oklahoma, southeast Kansas and western Missouri.

Tips to Stay Safe Before, During and After Tornadoes and Wildfires

Stay informed. Follow the instructions of state and local officials. They will provide the latest recommendations based on the threat to your community and appropriate safety measures. Monitor a [NOAA weather radio](#), local radio or television stations for updated emergency information. Download the free [FEMA App](#) to receive real-time weather and emergency alerts from the National Weather Service for up to five locations nationwide.



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Have a Plan

Tornadoes: Identify a safe shelter immediately, such as a safe room, basement, storm cellar or a small interior room on the lowest level of a sturdy building. If you can't stay at home, make plans to go to a public shelter or the home of friends, neighbors or family.

Wildfires: Be prepared to evacuate with little advance notice in case of a wildfire. Make sure everyone in your household knows and understands what to do if you need to quickly evacuate. Keep a kit with enough food, water, medicine and your important documents in a convenient place. Don't forget to plan for your pets.

Protect Yourself

Tornadoes: If you are under a tornado or severe weather warning immediately go to the safe location you identified. Stay away from windows, doors and outside walls. Cover your head or neck with your arms and put materials such as furniture and blankets around or on top of you. Watch out for flying debris that can cause injury or death.

There is no safe option when caught in a tornado in a car, just slightly less-dangerous ones. Do not go under an overpass or bridge, which can create deadly traffic hazards while offering little protection against flying debris. You're safer in a low, flat location.

Wildfires: Know your Evacuation Zone. You may have to evacuate quickly due to a wildfire. [Learn your evacuation routes](#), practice with household, pets and identify where you will go.

If trapped, call 9-1-1 and give your location, but be aware that emergency response could be delayed or impossible.

Staying Safe After a Tornado or Wildfire

Save phone calls for emergencies. Use text messaging or social media to communicate with family and friends.

Pay attention to local authorities for updated information. Wait for further care instructions and continue to shelter in place or stay out of the area as appropriate.



Stay clear of fallen power lines or broken utility lines. They may be live and can cause serious injury or death.

Wear appropriate gear during clean-up such as thick-soled shoes, long pants and work gloves; use appropriate face coverings or masks to protect yourself from dust, mold or smoke.

After a wildfire, avoid hot ash, charred trees, smoldering debris and live embers. The ground may contain heat pockets that can burn you or spark another fire. Use a respirator to limit your exposure to ash, and wet debris to minimize breathing dust particles. People with asthma, COPD and/or other lung conditions should take precautions in areas with poor air quality, as it can worsen symptoms.

