

## Severe Storm Precautions

*Church of the Good Shepherd*

4-15

Living in tornado alley has its challenges especially in the spring of the year. Many thunderstorms come through our area. Some of those storms will quickly turn severe. A few will even produce tornados. We are not experts in emergency management, meteorology, safety, etc. This document is written simply to help serve as guidance for our church family and staff in developing weather situations.

- 1) When there is a potential for threatening weather, organizations or events that are meeting may want to designate a person to monitor the situation through their cell phone, etc. If a severe storm moving into our area, it is advisable to be cautious.
- 2) Safest Severe Weather Places in our church buildings:
  - a. Remember that most tornadic storms in our area track from the southwest to the northeast.
  - b. According to the fire department the safest rooms are the interior rooms on the south side of our sanctuary. Those interior rooms are:
    - i. The Youth Director's office,
    - ii. The children's Resource Room,
    - iii. The Children's Day Out office.
  - c. Secondary rooms near the sanctuary:
    - i. The Men's and Women's restroom next door to the nursery just outside of the sanctuary entrance.
  - d. If you are in the Christian Life Center and do not believe that it is safe to go through the hall to the other building or the rooms in the other building are full, these are alternative areas within the Christian Life Center:
    - i. The restroom near the Christian Life Center kitchen and parlor. It is an interior room with no windows.
    - ii. The Conference Room at the base of the stairwell that leads to the youth area. There is a large heavy table that would provide additional shelter underneath. The outside window faces to the east. If you are sheltering in this room, take precautions against possible flying glass.
- 3) If a minor is at a church event at our buildings without a parent:
  - a. Use the same precautions that a local school would during such an event:
    - i. If a minor is without parents, they should stay at the church until there is an all clear given by local officials or someone comes to get them.
    - ii. If the minor is without parents and has driven to the church, confirmation should be received *via a verbal phone call* from the parent that the minor is allowed to leave. The parent should call

the youth's cell phone. The youth should give the phone to the youth director to discuss the situation verbally with the parent.

4) Resources available:

- a. Flashlights: are on most cell phones. There are also flashlights and batteries available at church in the bottom cabinet on the north wall of the children's Resource Room.
- b. T.V. broadcasts can be picked up by the television in the Christ In Action office in the Christian Life Center,
- c. First Aid Kits: available in the Christian Life Center kitchen, in the children's Resource Room, and in the Staff Area Kitchen near the sanctuary.

5) When to call off an event beforehand:

It is frequently impossible to know when a thunderstorm is going to turn severe or tornadic. But, sometimes it is evident that a super cell thunderstorm is producing or likely to produce tornados is headed for our area. If that is likely, then it is best for church events to be delayed or called off.

Mass texts indicating the status of events especially for children and youth should be set up using such mass texting sites as "Remind 101".

6) Staff responsibility:

Sometimes in severe weather situations, staff members must leave to take care of loved ones who are disabled in some way or who are minor children. If the staff person must leave to care for a ill or disabled loved one or minor child, the staff person should designate a willing adult to lead in the situation.

If possible, staff should:

- a) stay advised of the weather situation,
- b) stay at church to assist those who have to shelter in the church,  
and
- c) get everyone into designated safest places in the buildings during siren warnings.