

Spring is the time of year when many things change—including the weather. Temperatures can swing back and forth between balmy and frigid. Sunny days may be followed by a week of stormy weather. Sometimes extreme weather changes can occur even within the same day. Spring weather can be unpredictable. When severe weather hits unexpectedly, the risk of injury and death increases, so planning ahead makes sense. Prepare for storms, floods, and tornadoes as if you know in advance they are coming, because in the spring, they very likely will.

Thunderstorms cause most of the severe spring weather. They can bring lightning, tornadoes and flooding. Whenever warm, moist air collides with cool, dry air, thunderstorms can occur.

Advance planning for thunderstorms, lightning, tornadoes and floods requires specific safety precautions. Still, you can follow many of the same steps for all extreme weather events. You should have on hand:

- A battery-operated flashlight, a battery-operated NOAA Weather Radio, and extra batteries for both
- An emergency evacuation plan, including a map of your home and, for every type of severe weather emergency, routes to safety from each room
- A list of important personal information, including
  - telephone numbers of neighbors, family and friends
  - insurance and property information
  - telephone numbers of utility companies
  - medical information
- A first aid kit including
  - prescription medication
  - hydrogen peroxide
  - antibiotic ointment
  - over-the-counter medicines such as aspirin and diarrhea medicine
  - bandages and dressings for injuries
- A 3–5 day supply of bottled water and nonperishable food
- Personal hygiene items
- Blankets or sleeping bags
- An emergency kit in your car



Prepare your family members for the possibility of severe weather. Tell them where to seek appropriate shelter as soon as they are aware of an approaching storm. Practice your emergency plan for every type of severe weather. Show family members where the emergency supplies are stored, and make sure they know how to turn off the water, gas, and electricity in your home.