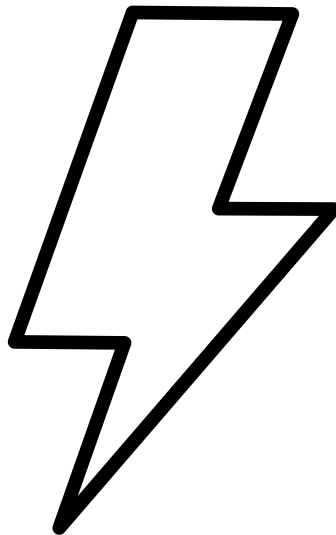
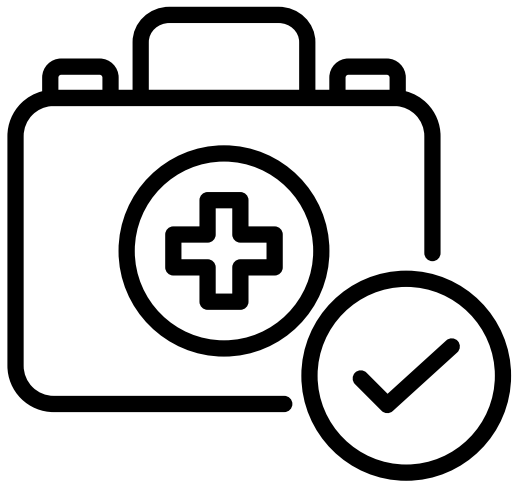


# POLK COUNTY EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Severe Weather Awareness

Coloring & Activity Book

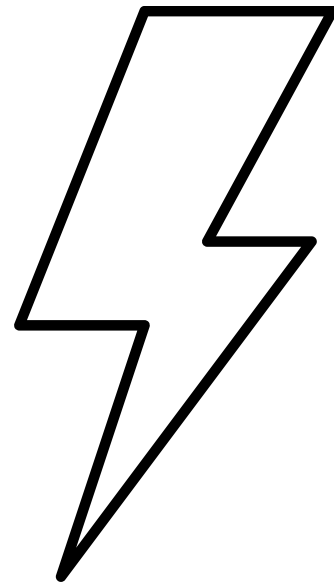
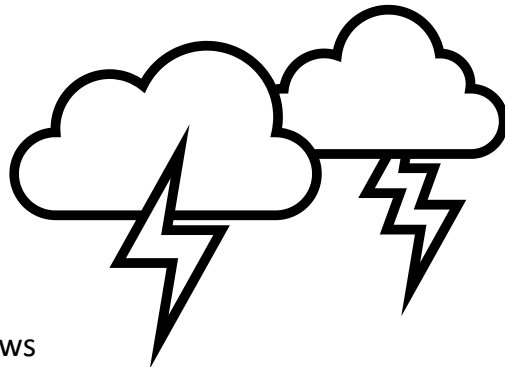
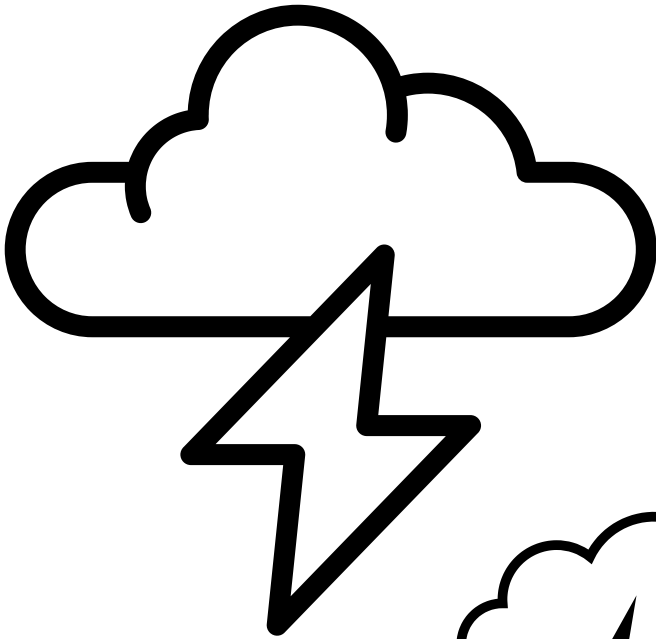


# LIGHTNING SAFETY

## LIGHTNING!

Lightning strikes the earth an average of **100 times** per second!

**Go Inside:** Lightning is dangerous! It can strike at least 10 miles outside of a thunderstorm. You should wait until 30 minutes after the last rumble of thunder before going back outside.



### Safety Tips:

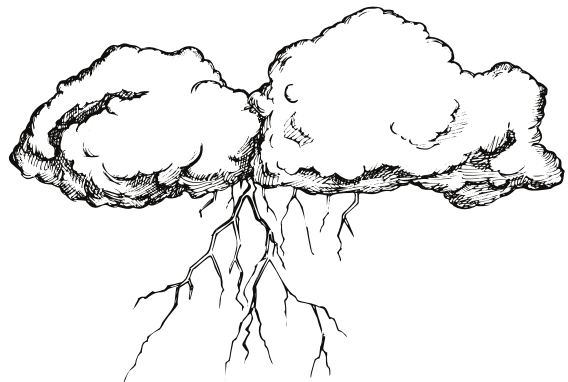
- Get inside
- Stay away from windows
- Do not shower during lightning storms
- Lightning tends to strike taller objects in the area. Stay away from trees, towers, and powerlines if you're caught outside.

### Did You Know?

Lightning strikes the United States 25 MILLION times every year.

Lightning is the most common thunderstorm hazard because it occurs in EVERY thunderstorm.

Thunder is the sound caused by lightning heating the air to 54,000 degrees Fahrenheit!



# TORNADO SAFETY

A tornado is a violently rotating column of air extending from the base of a thunderstorm down to the ground.

The strongest tornadoes can produce wind speeds over 200 miles per hour!

The safest place to be during a tornado is:

1. **INSIDE**
2. **AWAY FROM WINDOWS**
3. **LOW** -- In a basement, or the middle of the lowest level

Avoid:

- Mobile homes are never safe in a tornado. Know where the nearest safe shelter is located.
- Gymnasiums, big box stores, or any areas with high ceilings and long-span walls. Find an interior bathroom or small office/storage area
- Long hallways with exterior doors



It is important to know your tornado safety plan, so you can act quickly. Think about your plan. Do you know where to go in your house if there is a tornado? What about at school?

Are the rooms you use at home different than the types of rooms you would use at school?

**Be Prepared!** Write down where your safety areas are at home and at school.

## My Tornado Safety Areas:

At home I go to:

---

At school I go to:

---



# FAMILY PREPAREDNESS

## 1. Build A Kit

## 2. Make A Plan

## 3. Practice The Plan

Build an emergency kit with important items that you may need if you had to leave home or are without power. Include sturdy shoes, a bike helmet for protection, important medication, phone chargers, and pet supplies.

In case you are separated, or need to evacuate your home:

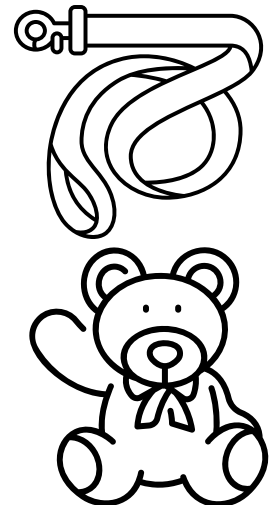


Create a family communications plan in case you are separated.

Designate a meeting place like a nearby playground, landmark, or a friend or relative's home. Pick one location nearby, and another outside the neighborhood.



**TIP!**  
One **small** toy in an emergency kit or storm shelter may help keep children calm or less anxious!



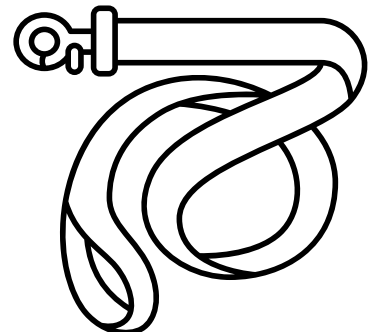
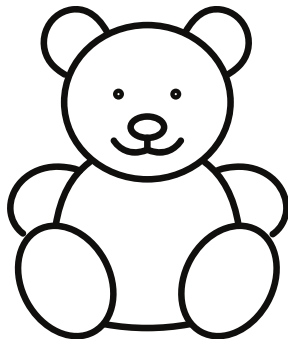
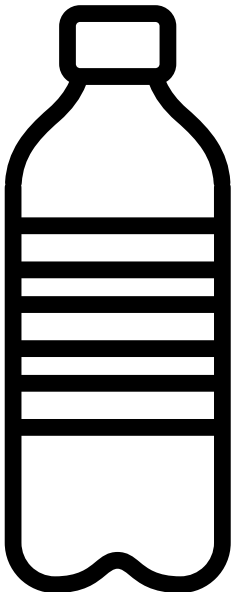
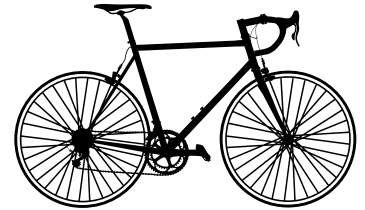
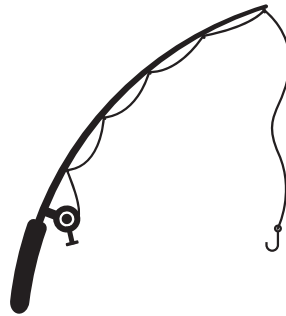
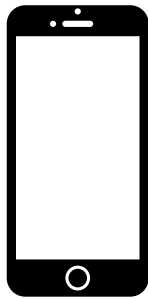
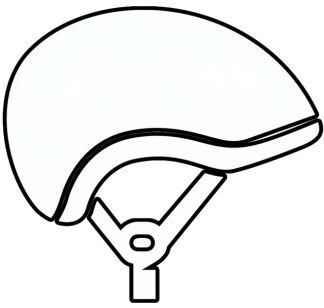
**Be Prepared!** Practice your plan with drills. Make sure everyone knows where to go and what to bring. At the end of your drill, think about if anything is missing, or if there are ways to make the plan work better.

# FAMILY PREPAREDNESS

Circle items that would be good to keep in your emergency kit.

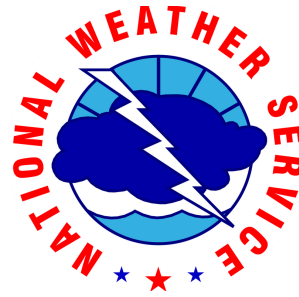
Talk with an adult about why items are good choices.

See if you can think of other things to put in the kit too!



# PREPARE TO GET WARNINGS

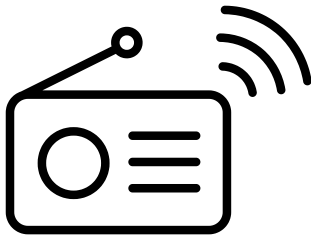
The **National Weather Service** warns us about storms. Usually, they will issue a **WATCH** *before* storms. A **WATCH** means we should pay extra attention to the weather that day.



A **TORNADO WATCH** means we *might* have storms that *could* make a tornado.

Once storms are happening, the weather service might issue a **WARNING**. A **TORNADO WARNING** means a storm is happening *right now* that might have a tornado. Follow your tornado safety plan right away!

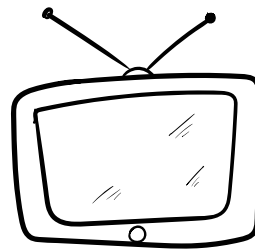
There are lots of good ways to get warnings:



**Weather Radios:**

A special kind of radio that can run on batteries and automatically turn on. This is a great choice for overnight warnings when you are asleep

**Cell Phones**



**Local TV and radio**



## Did you know?

Sirens are only meant to be heard **outside**.

You may not be able to hear them inside, especially if the storm is loud or you are asleep! Make sure you pick other ways to get warnings inside.

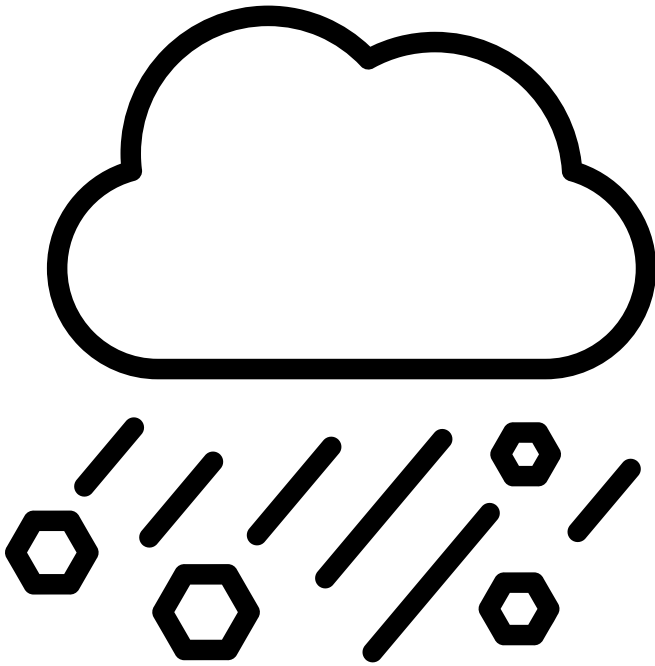
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**Be Prepared!** Have an adult sign up for Polk County Alert Iowa! In addition to other emergency alerts, they can choose a combination of notifications for Tornado, Severe Thunderstorm, High Wind, Flood, Flash Flood, and Blizzard warnings. The alerts are address based, so they can be set for home, work, school, or another family member's home location within Polk County.



# HAIL AND WIND

## SAFETY



### Hail grows in the clouds!

Inside the cloud the strong wind can form large hail. The wind blows rain drops high in the sky until they freeze. They start as tiny ice cubes, but grow until the wind can't hold them up anymore. Hail as big as baseballs has fallen in Iowa before.

If there is a severe thunderstorm in your area, go inside and stay away from windows.

The winds could break windows if strong enough, or could blow hail stones into the glass. Falling trees or other loose items could also cause damage that you want to be far away from.

Our strongest storms are called SEVERE Thunderstorms. To be severe, storms must:

Have wind speeds of at least 58 miles per hour  
OR  
Hail at least 1 inch in diameter -- the same size as a quarter  
OR  
BOTH!

Wind speeds in the strongest lines of severe thunderstorms - called a DERECHO - can reach speeds over 100 miles per hour.

### DID YOU KNOW?

In 2020, a derecho produced winds of 140 mph near Cedar Rapids, Iowa!



### Be Prepared!

Gather flashlights and extra batteries. Monitor television broadcasts or weather radios to get updated warning information. What are some other things you think you could do to stay safe during a storm?

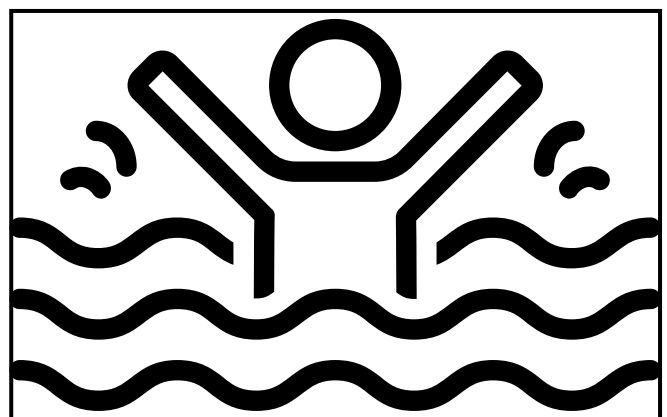
# FLASH FLOODS

Flash floods are a dangerous type of flooding that can occur quickly during thunderstorms. Flash floods are common along creeks and streams and other narrow bodies of water where levels can rise several feet in an hour or less.



Never drive through flooded roadways. Cars can be swept away in just a foot of water. Roads could be damaged or have other dangerous obstructions in the way under the water.

- Never play in flood waters. Currents can be difficult to see, and as little as six inches of fast moving flood water can knock you off your feet.
- Flood water is not clean! Chemicals and other contaminants could cause you to get sick.
- Flooded streets or parking lots could drain quickly once drains catch up or obstructions clear, leading to additional dangerous currents



**Be Prepared!** Know your risk. Do you live near a creek, stream, or river? Does it flood often? If you live in a flood prone area, be prepared to move to higher ground if water begins to rise. Where would you go? This is a good location to add to your **family preparedness plan** meeting places.



# POP QUIZ

1. Severe thunderstorms can have winds of a least 58 miles per hour, or hail at least as big as a \_\_\_\_\_?

- A. Nickel                      B. Dime                      C. Quarter                      D. Pizza

2. Flash floods can have very powerful currents. As little as \_\_\_\_ inches of water can knock you off your feet.

3. Which one of these locations is a safe place to be in a severe thunderstorm?

- A. Outside under a tree                      B. Watching the storm by the window  
C. In the shower                      D. Inside, away from windows

4. The strongest tornadoes can produce wind speeds over \_\_\_\_\_ miles per hour.

5. What is a good way to get warnings when you are asleep?

- A. Outdoor sirens                      B. TV  
C. Weather Radio                      D. Storms don't happen at night

6. Name 3 things that should go in an emergency kit.

7. A way for adults to get emergency messages and weather warnings on their phone for home, work, or school, is from \_\_\_\_\_ Iowa

- A. Alert                      B. Warn                      C. Heads Up                      D. Look Out

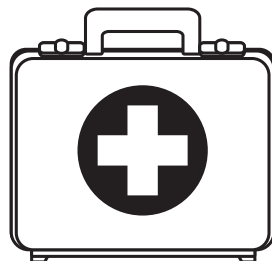
# WORD SEARCH

U W D T O R N A D O K Y V K Z Z O S C G  
R E A D C G C X W G W A R N I N G K T I  
B A S E M E N T W Y N A L P W T P O J V  
S T C U K T B L L Y L I M A F A A R E K  
D H L D P C F L A S H L I G H T E J E M  
C E O D Q P H M S A F E T Y X T T V N R  
C R U O N A L P K S K F N I L D A Q O N  
Y L D O I Y C I H J E M Y E W C O P I E  
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Y H R H G Z B K F T A B T R Z V E C C S  
Q U S S E N D E R A P E R P A Q R T I X  
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N Y W Y L I G H T N I N G M B G K M Z H

ALERT  
CLOUD  
EMERGENCY  
FLASHFLOOD  
HAZARD  
PLAN  
RAIN  
SEVERE  
STORM  
TORNADO  
WEATHER

AWARENESS  
COMMUNICATION  
EVACUATE  
FLASHLIGHT  
KIT  
PRACTICE  
SAFETY  
SHELTER  
SUPPLIES  
WARNING  
WEATHERRADIO

BASEMENT  
DRILL  
FAMILY  
HAIL  
LIGHTNING  
PREPAREDNESS  
SAFETY  
SIREN  
THUNDER  
WATCH  
WIND



# STORM PLANNING TIMELINE

When there are storms in the forecast, it's important to plan ahead. Use this checklist to make sure everything is ready for your safety plan to be a success.

## **2 Days Before**

- Check your kit. Do you need to refresh supplies?
- Review your plan. Does everyone know where the safe spaces are?
- Double check your communication plan and schedules. Where is everyone expected to be? What's the best way to communicate?

## **1 Day Before**

- If the forecast is still bad, consider changing plans. It may not be the best time to be on a lake, or camping outside.
- Make sure you know how to get warnings, and any devices like phones or weather radios are properly set up.
- Double check the safety area. Make sure it is clean and accessible.

## **The Day Of**

- Pay attention to the weather and your warning sources.
- Make sure to communicate with family if you are not together.
- Be aware of safety areas for places outside your home if you are out.
- Follow all warnings and act quickly.

# EMERGENCY INFORMATION

Fill out the information on this page to start you family emergency preparedness plan. Keep this information in your emergency kit so it is with you and easy to find in an emergency.

My Name Is: \_\_\_\_\_

My Phone Number Is: \_\_\_\_\_

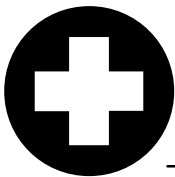
My Address Is: \_\_\_\_\_

My Town Is: \_\_\_\_\_

I Live With: \_\_\_\_\_

---

## EMERGENCY NUMBERS



\_\_\_\_\_



\_\_\_\_\_



\_\_\_\_\_



\_\_\_\_\_

Mom or Guardian



\_\_\_\_\_

Dad or Guardian

# BE PREPARED

Here are some important links that can help you and your family be prepared:

Family Emergency Plan Template:

[https://www.polkcountyiowa.gov/media/oqbpvbb/polk-county-\\_my-emergency-plan.pdf](https://www.polkcountyiowa.gov/media/oqbpvbb/polk-county-_my-emergency-plan.pdf)



Alert Iowa Information & Sign Up:

<https://www.polkcountyiowa.gov/emergency-management/be-prepared/polk-county-alert-iowa/>

RapidSOS Emergency Health Profiles:

<https://www.polkcountyiowa.gov/emergency-management/be-prepared/rapid-sos-emergency-health-profiles/>



Polk County Emergency Management - Be Prepared:

<https://www.polkcountyiowa.gov/emergency-management/be-prepared/>

