

## **Severe Storms and Tornadoes – Updated Temporary Policy and Procedures 3.31.2020**

You are responsible for finding an area of refuge in the event of a tornado. We know many of you prefer to seek refuge early. In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, we strongly discourage individuals from coming to an area of refuge before necessary. If a tornadic event is imminent, and you must find an area of refuge, please do your best to maintain social distancing guidelines as laid out by the CDC.

**NOC does not have any public community shelters. All severe weather refuge locations, listed below, are for the use of NOC students and employees. While the campus has transitioned to online learning, business hours refuge locations remain the same for employees working in the buildings.**

Severe Weather Refuge Areas:

- Enid - Zollars Library, Everest Administration, E.B. Residence Hall and Jets Hall
- Stillwater - NOC Classroom Building; rooms 170, 175, 180 and 185
- Tonkawa - Vineyard Library – Administration Building, Wilkin Hall, Mavericks Hall, Threlkeld Hall and Markley Hall

Monitor weather reports and go to these buildings when it begins to storm. Unfortunately, taking pets into approved storm shelters is strongly discouraged because it limits the space available for NOC students and employees seeking shelter.

If the building you are in does not have a basement, go to the ground floor and enter an interior (windowless) room or hallway. **It is too risky to go to another building once the sirens have sounded.**

- Shut off equipment that might be affected by a temporary loss of electricity.
- Close hallway doors as you leave to shield the corridors from flying debris.
- Stay away from windows.
- Use telephones for emergency calls only.
- Stay calm and alert.
- Stay tuned to any local radio or TV station for storm details.
- Dial 911 to report injuries and emergencies caused by the storm.
- Call Physical Plant to report all damage.
- There will not be an all clear signal from the alert sirens. Additional blasts indicate a new or renewed alert.
- Report locations of trapped persons, making note of persons with injuries and/or disabilities.

**Persons with Disabilities**

Persons with disabilities who are mobility impaired must also make plans. If a power outage occurs during severe weather, elevators may not work. Go to a small interior room or closet (or a landing in an interior stairwell); stay away from windows and exterior walls. Tell someone where you will be going and take a cell phone, if possible.

### **Tornado Tips**

- In the event of tornadoes, basements generally offer the best protection. Otherwise go into an interior room (bathroom/shower) or hallway on the lowest floor possible.
- Put as many walls as possible between you and the outside when possible.
- Get under a piece of sturdy furniture, such as a workbench or heavy table or desk and hold on to it.
- Avoid large open rooms, if possible.
- Crouch as low as possible to the floor, facing down; and cover your head with your hands.
- Even in an interior room, you should cover yourself with some sort of thick padding (mattress, blankets, etc.), to protect against falling debris and flying objects in case the roof and ceiling fail.
- Faculty, staff, and/or students should remain at your chosen "Safe Area" location until advised that it is safe to return to their regular work or study area or to leave the building until the tornado or severe weather has passed and you have received an all clear via the local media.
- Remember, there is no "all clear" siren activation. Weather, especially a severe storm, is unpredictable or the storm may have several lines of developing storms and as each approaching threat reaches the City, another siren notification may be sounded. I recommend you give serious consideration to using a portable battery-operated radio tuned to a local broadcast station to provide you with local warning information and to let you know when the severe weather has passed.

### **NOC Buildings will Remain Closed After Hours Until Further Notice**

NOC buildings will remain closed to the public to reduce COVID-19 spread. If a tornado threat occurs and you have historically used an NOC building as your primary tornado refuge, prepare now to seek safe refuge at home. Use the "get in - get down - cover up" strategy. Specifically, select an interior room away from doors and windows on the lowest level of your residence and prepare to use a bicycle helmet, pillows, blankets to protect yourself from possible debris. The refuge-in-home option for tornadoes will also assist in reducing the spread of COVID-19. Add masks, tissues, gloves, hand sanitizer and even a plastic bag to your personal or family's tornado refuge area supply list. Make sure any cough or sneeze is into a tissue or clothed sleeve. Use the gloves to dispose of used tissues into the plastic bag.

*This policy and procedures will be in place for the remainder of the Spring Semester 2020, and is subject to change.*