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TORNADO PLAN

Tornado drills should be practiced at least twice a year, prior to early spring and the beginning of the tornado season.

Prior to conducting a tornado drill or exercise, all school staff including bus drivers and evening staff need to be trained on their specific roles. This training should include storm spotting techniques, use of radios or other media to monitor the progress of the tornado (internet, weather radio, etc.) and locations of safe areas. Students should be given instruction on what to do when the tornado response plan is activated.

INTRODUCTION:

Tornados typically form from severe thunderstorms, however only a small number of thunderstorms produce tornados. Tornados are simply rotating columns of strong wind extending to the ground from thunderstorms. Most tornados will produce only light to modest damage to well-built structures.

Canada ranks second in the world for tornado occurrences, after the United States. The majority of Canadian tornados occur in the Prairies and southern Ontario, and usually occur in the late afternoon or early evening.

The primary threat to schools is near the end of classes when buses/parents arrive, when students are walking/biking home, during after-school activities and during evening classes and activities. School based day care facilities typically have children well after normal school hours and must be included in planning for tornados.

PLANNING FOR A TORNADO:

Planning for a tornado will minimize the threat of injury. As with any potential hazard, the basic approach to mitigation is:

Identify the hazard.
Identify ways to minimize the impact of the hazard.
Develop an effective response plan.
Practice the plan.

Identify the Hazard:

Unlike many natural and man-made hazards, tornados can be predicted. Environment Canada's Meteorological Service of Canada will alert the public using standard terminology bulletins. In order of severity:

A **Tornado Watch** will be initiated when there is a higher than normal chance that tornados will occur with severe thunderstorms later in the day. Typically the Watch is issued 2 to 6 hours prior to when these potential storms are expected. Information is updated when it becomes available. A Tornado Watch simply gives people a heads-up to the possibility of tornados. This is the time to monitor the Watch updates and watch the skies.

	During a Tornado Watch, routine school activities can continue. Outdoor activities can also continue but with an eye to the sky for approaching thunderstorms.
	A Severe Thunderstorm Warning will be initiated when something dangerous is detected. This warning indicates that large hail, strong winds, flooding downpour and intense lightning is or will soon be occurring in the area.
	During a Severe Thunderstorm Warning, all students should be inside the school. Classes and other indoor activities may continue. Tornados may occur during a Severe Thunderstorm Warning so staff should be prepared to initiate their Tornado Plan immediately if required. If large hail (>3cm) occurs, staff and students should be relocated away from windows.
	A Tornado Warning will be initiated when a tornado has been spotted or is indicated on radar. This is the most important warning, and will prompt the activation of your Tornado Response Plan.
	During a Tornado Warning, all occupants should be relocated to their designated safe areas, including persons on waiting school buses. Evacuation or relocation to another building should not be initiated unless ordered by the person in charge of the scene (fire, police, medical, etc.).
	A second way to identify a tornado hazard is through observation of the skies. Tornados appear in many forms. They range from very thin to over a kilometer wide. A tornado is a rotating column of air and will become visible when it fills with cloud or debris. As there are many cloud features that can be mistaken for tornados and the funnel may be difficult to spot due to obstructions, storm spotting information should be part of your Plan.
<u>lde</u>	entify Ways to Minimize The Impact of The Hazard:
The simple rule in protecting yourself from a tornado is to be as low as possible and put as many walls between you and the tornado as possible. Designated safety areas should be established for your school using the following basic considerations:	
	Windows offer little protection – flying shattered glass can be lethal.
	Glass atriums offer little protection.
	Exterior walls are more vulnerable than interior walls. Upper floors are more vulnerable than lower floors.
	Rooms with wide span roofs (gyms, auditoriums, large cafeterias, etc.) are prone to
	collapse especially if an exterior wall forms part of the space.
	Portable classrooms offer little protection.
	Below ground rooms and spaces offer the greatest protection.
	Smaller interior spaces with no exterior walls (corridors, washrooms, etc.) are more resistant to collapse. Avoid spaces located below roof mounted equipment (HVAC fans,

etc.)

	Safe areas should have quick and easy access for all occupants – don't use spaces that are normally locked or out-of-bounds for students. Safe areas should be established so that there is enough space for all building occupants. This can be determined through drills and planning exercises.
	nce safe areas have been designated, they should be identified with legible, permanent inage.
<u>De</u>	velop an Effective Response Plan:
A t	ornado response plan should include:
	A list of specific school staff members designated to monitor commercial radio or television for tornado warnings and relay pertinent information to other staff members, including bus drivers.
	A battery operated radio - if the electricity should go out, you will still be able to receive emergency information.
	A distinct tornado warning code or statement for alerting occupants via the overhead paging system. Never use the school fire alarm to sound a tornado warning.
	A list of designated tornado shelter area(s) within the school. These should be based on
	the construction of the school. Construction information may be obtained from the Division Facilities and Operations Department. Schools that have basements should designate them as shelters. Schools without basements should designate interior hallways on the ground floor, away from exterior walls, as shelter areas. Gymnasiums, auditoriums and other rooms with large, free-span roofs should <u>not</u> be utilized as shelter areas. Students in portable or temporary classrooms <u>must</u> be evacuated to designated shelter areas or predetermined safe exterior areas such as ditches, culverts or ravines.
	A set of instructions dictating exactly what to do when a tornado warning is given. Time is of the essence and you may have only seconds to act. All school personnel should be familiar with established tornado procedures and review them periodically. Safe, orderly movement to the shelter areas is crucial. Students should walk, not run, to their designated area. Classroom doors should be closed after students are relocated to the shelter area. Do not open windows in the classroom; time is better spent seeking shelter. The school tornado response plan should include procedures to assist students with disabilities in getting to their shelter area. Students assembled in designated tornado shelter areas should be instructed to get on their knees in a prone position,
	making sure their heads face interior walls, while placing their hands behind their heads A list of specific staff members designated to remove students from playgrounds or
	other outdoor areas during a tornado and direct them to their designated shelter areas. The plan must also provide coaches and athletic directors with guidance in the event severe weather occurs during athletic events.
	A tornado shelter route diagram posted in plain view in every classroom. This could be incorporated into the building Fire Plan documentation.
	A procedure to reoccupy the building after the tornado has passed.

In order to remain proactive in tornado preparedness, school officials should conduct tornado shelter <u>drills</u>. All tornado drills should include staff and student participation and movement to shelter areas as primary components.

Practice the Plan:

Prior to conducting a tornado drill or exercise, all school staff including bus drivers and evening staff need to be trained on their specific roles. This training should include storm spotting techniques, use of radios or other media to monitor the progress of the tornado (internet, weather radio, etc.) and locations of safe areas.

Students should be given instruction on what to do when the Tornado Response Plan is activated.

Tornado drills should be conducted in early spring, just prior to the beginning of the tornado season.

Upon completion of each tornado drill, the persons involved in conducting the drill should have a debriefing meeting to discuss what went right, what went wrong and how the plan can be improved.

WHAT TO DO DURING A TORNADO WARNING:

If you are inside, go to your safe area to protect yourself from glass and other flying objects. Tornadoes can change direction, intensity and speed very quickly. The tornado may be approaching your area.
Get under a piece of sturdy furniture, such as a workbench or heavy table, and hold on to it. Sturdy furniture will help protect you from falling debris. If tornado wind enters the room and the object moves, holding on with one hand will help you move with it, keeping you protected.
Use your other arm and hand to protect your head and neck from falling or flying objects. Your head and neck are more easily injured than other parts of your body. Protect them as much as you can.
Stay away from windows. Opening windows allows damaging winds to enter the structure. Leave the windows alone. It is a myth that tornadoes cause buildings to explode due to changes in air pressure. Flying debris can shatter glass. Violent winds and debris slamming into buildings cause most structural damage.
If you're outside in a car, go immediately to the basement of a nearby sturdy building. Sturdy buildings are the safest place to be. Tornado winds can blow large objects, including cars and mobile homes, hundreds of feet away. Tornadoes can change direction quickly and can lift up a car or bus and toss it through the air; never try to outdrive a tornado.
If there is no building nearby, lie flat in a low spot. Use your arms and hands to protect your head. Tornadoes cause a lot of debris to be blown at very high speeds, and you can be hurt by this debris if it hits you. Dangerous flying debris can be blown under highway overpasses and bridges, or weaker overpasses and bridges could be destroyed. You will be safer lying flat in a low-lying area where wind and debris will blow above you. Tornadoes come from severe thunderstorms, which can produce a lot of rain. If you see quickly rising water or flood water coming towards you, move to another spot.

	Avoid places with wide-span roofs, such as auditoriums, cafeterias, large hallways or shopping malls. Wide-span roofs are frequently damaged or destroyed in tornado winds, providing less protection and more risk of injury, than roofs over smaller rooms.
	School buses should not be operated during a period of tornado warning. If a tornado warning is issued or severe threatening weather is observed at dismissal time, students should be moved to designated tornado shelter areas in the school. The school tornado response plan should provide bus drivers with information identifying potential shelters along their routes. Drivers must be prepared to move students to the nearest shelter if a warning is issued or threatening weather is observed. In the event there is no immediate shelter, students should evacuate the bus to a ditch, culvert, ravine or low lying area and assume the protective position until the threat of severe weather has passed.
	If the damage is a risk to occupants or if there is major damage (with or without casualties), call 9-1-1.
WI	HAT TO DO AFTER A TORNADO:
	Continue listening to local radio or television stations for updated information and instructions. Access may be limited to some parts of the community or roads may be blocked.
	Help anyone who may require special assistance - infants, small children, elderly people and people with disabilities or special needs. Elderly people and people with disabilities may require additional assistance. Staff who are designated to care for them may need additional assistance in emergency situations.
	Help injured or trapped persons. Give first aid where appropriate. Do not move seriously injured persons unless they are in immediate danger of further injury. Call for help.
	Watch out for fallen power lines or broken gas lines and report them to the utility company immediately. Reporting potential hazards will get the utilities turned off as quickly as possible, preventing further hazard and injury.
	Avoid disaster areas. Your presence might hamper rescue and other emergency operations and put you at further risk from the residual effects of tornadoes.
	Do not enter any damaged areas until they have been inspected and designated safe by the authorities and/or Division Facilities and Operations staff.
	When entering damaged areas use extreme caution. Moving through debris presents further hazards. Carefully watch every step you take. Wear sturdy shoes. The most common injury following a disaster is cut feet.
	Use battery-powered lanterns or flashlights when examining buildings. Battery-powered lighting is the safest and easiest to use and reduces any potential fire hazard for the user occupants, and building

	Examine walls, floors, doors, staircases and windows to make sure that the building is not in danger of collapsing.
	Look for fire hazards. There may be broken or leaking gas lines or damage to electrical systems. Immediately arrange for the clean-up of spilled hazardous products. Fire is the most frequent hazard following other disasters.
	Check for gas leaks. If you smell gas or hear a blowing or hissing noise, open a window and quickly leave the building. Turn off the gas using the outside main valve if you can and call the gas company from a remote location. If you turn off the gas for any reason, it must be turned back on by a professional.
	Look for electrical system damage. If you see sparks or broken or frayed wires, or if you smell burning insulation, turn off the electricity at the main fuse box or circuit breaker. If you have to step in water to get to the fuse box or circuit breaker, call an electrician first for advice. Electrical equipment should be checked and dried before being returned to service.
	Watch for loose plaster, drywall and ceilings that could fall.
	Take pictures of the damage, both of the building and its contents, for insurance claims.
	Use the telephone only for emergency calls. Telephone lines are frequently overwhelmed in disaster situations. They need to be clear for emergency calls to get through.
	Document all activities conducted during the tornado response: What went right and what went wrong? Can the plan be improved? Can other schools learn from your experience?
M	AKING A PLAN FOR YOUR SCHOOL:
	Determine the locations of the safe areas in your school using the above guidelines.
	Prepare a map indicating the locations of safe areas. Post the map in common areas like gyms and lunchrooms. Maps do not need to be posted in every classroom; however they must be included in every classroom's Emergency Kit.
	Introduce the plan to all staff and students, including night staff and others that may be in the school at odd hours.
	Gather the school's Emergency Response Team (ERT) for a meeting to discuss how to conduct a tornado response drill. The scenario should be as realistic as possible.

Ensure that all staff who will be participating in the drill are aware of their specific tasks during the drill. Determine the date and time of the drill.

A few days before the scheduled drill, announce the date and time that the drill will be conducted. This will generate awareness and give staff an opportunity to go over the plan with students so that everyone knows what they have to do.
Conduct the drill. All actions should be monitored and documented by members of the ERT.
Immediately upon completion of the drill, the ERT should meet and discuss what went right and what went wrong.

TORNADO PLAN - PHASE 1: TORNADO WATCH

A tornado watch will be initiated when there is a higher than normal chance that tornados will occur with severe thunderstorms later in the day. Typically the Watch is issued 2 to 6 hours prior to when these potential storms are expected. Information is updated when it becomes available. A Tornado Watch simply gives people a heads-up to the possibility of tornados. This is the time to monitor the Watch updates and watch the skies.

During a Tornado Watch, routine school activities can continue. Outdoor activities can also continue but with an eye to the sky for approaching thunderstorms.
Assign one or two people as storm watchers. When a tornado watch is in effect these individuals will be asked to watch the storms as they approach for funnel clouds. If funnel clouds are spotted these individuals will need to alert the school immediately.
If funnel clouds are spotted the school must proceed to their emergency locations in the school.
A special announcement should be made to indicate a tornado has been sighted and is approaching. A backup alarm should be planned for use if electrical power fails - perhaps a battery-operated bullhorn, an inexpensive hand-cranked siren or even an old-fashioned hand-swung bell.

TORNADO PLAN - PHASE 2: TORNADO WARNING

Tornado Warnings are issued when there is a confirmed sighting of a tornado on the ground, when weather spotters report funnel clouds with a rotating thunderstorm or a tornado signature is detected on Doppler radar. During a tornado warning all staff and students should move to their designated tornado safe zones including persons on waiting school buses. Evacuation or relocation to another building should not be initiated unless ordered by the person in charge of the scene (fire, police, medical, etc.).

During a Tornado Warning, all occupants should be relocated to their designated safe areas until the danger has passed.

When a tornado warning is issued for your area, initiate your tornado drill. It should take
no more than 2 minutes to move all students to their safety zones.
If the storm has not yet reached your school, begin moving students from unsafe areas.
(From your drills you should know approximately how long it will take to move students
into "tornado safe areas".)
Move students out of mobile classrooms and away from windows. Portable classrooms
are like mobile homes - exceptionally dangerous in a tornado.
Make special provisions for disabled students.
Specific teachers should be assigned to round up children on playgrounds or other
outdoor areas during a tornado warning. Otherwise, they might be overlooked.
Post a trained teacher or school employee to keep an eye on the storms as they
approach.
As the storm nears, move all students to the designated safe places (interior halls, etc.)
in a calm, orderly and firm manner. Everyone should then crouch low, head down,
protecting the back of the head with the arms.



When children are assembled in school basements or interior hallways during a tornado
drill or warning, they should be instructed to respond to a specific command to assume
protective postures, facing interior walls, when the danger in imminent. Such a
command might be: "Everybody down!" It is essential that this command be instantly
understood and obeyed. Illustrations showing the protective position should be posted
on bulletin boards.
It may be best to hold classes beyond your regular dismissal time until the severe

weather threat has passed. Likewise, at the end of the school day, students may need to be held from boarding buses until the danger has passed.

School buses should not be operated during a period of tornado warning. If a tornado
warning is issued or severe threatening weather is observed at dismissal time students
should be moved to designated tornado shelter areas in the school. The school tornado
response plan should provide bus drivers with information identifying potential shelters
along their routes. Drivers must be prepared to move students to the nearest shelter if a
warning is issued or threatening weather is observed. In the event there is no immediate
shelter, students should evacuate the bus to a ditch, culvert, ravine or low lying area and
assume the protective position until the threat of severe weather has passed.
Once the storm has passed, students may return to classrooms.

Safety During Athletic Events:

Protecting athletes and spectators once severe storms or tornadoes begin moving into an area is essentially impossible because there is so little time to act and because safe shelter is much more difficult to find for tornadoes than for other types of severe weather. Suggesting that everyone go home when there is an imminent tornado is not acceptable, because automobiles are not safe shelters under these conditions.

The single most effective tornado precaution an athletic program can take is to obtain accurate, current weather information and shut down athletic events when violent weather threatens.

For tornado safety, athletic programs should:

Designate a chain of command for making the decision to remove individuals from an athletic site.
Designate an individual who will obtain a weather forecast each day before a practice or event and monitor weather forecasts constantly when there is any threat of severe storms or tornadoes.
Athletes and coaching staff should know where the closest "safe shelter" is. Safe shelter for tornadoes is defined as the basement of a sturdy building, away from windows, glass doors and chimneys. If a basement is not available, an interior hallway on the lowest floor is best. Rooms with large, free-span roofs like gymnasiums should be avoided. The inside of an automobile is not a safe place if a tornado is imminent. If no safe building is nearby, individuals should seek shelter in a ditch, ravine or other place below ground level and stay as low as possible.
Tornado watch or severe thunderstorm watch: If a watch is issued during a practice, practice can continue, as long as coaching staff and athletes know how to get to a nearby safe shelter and Weather Radio is being continually monitored. However, if a watch is issued 3 hours before a game or during a game, teachers should consider cancelling or suspending the game.
Tornado warning or severe thunderstorm warning: If a warning is issued during either a practice or game, athletic activity should be suspended and all participants moved as

rapidly as possible to safe shelter. Athletic activity should not be resumed until the National Weather Service suspends the warning.

TORNADO PLAN – RECOVERY

If your school is hit, a predetermined safety team should assess damage and injuries. If injuries/structural damage have occurred, call 911. Do not enter any damaged areas until they have been inspected and designated safe by the authorities.
Schools will communicate with the Admin Office via the most effective means available. The Superintendent and Safety & Health Officer are to be notified in a real situation.
All communication to the media shall be directed to the Communications Officer at ext. 1034. Parents will be directed to the emergency reception center where they will be supplied with information about their children as information becomes available.
Keep students assembled in an orderly manner, in a safe area away from broken glass and other sharp debris and away from power lines, puddles containing power lines and emergency traffic areas. Take attendance.
Continue listening to local radio or television stations for updated information and instructions. Access may be limited to some parts of the community or roads may be blocked.
Help anyone who may require special assistance - infants, small children, elderly people and people with disabilities or special needs. Elderly people and people with disabilities may require additional assistance. Staff who are designated to care for them may need additional assistance in emergency situations.
Help injured or trapped persons. Do not move seriously injured persons unless they are in immediate danger of further injury. Call for help. While waiting for emergency personnel to arrive, carefully render aid to those who are injured. Keep everyone out of damaged parts of the school; chunks of debris or even that whole section of the building may fall down.
Ensure nobody is using matches or lighters in case of leaking natural gas pipes or fuel tanks nearby.
Stay alert for the potential for additional storms.
After a tornado or severe thunderstorm, it may be necessary to shut off the gas and electric supply to the building if damage has occurred to the school. You should have at least several people other than the caretaker who know how to shut off the main power
(electricity) and gas (if applicable). Check for gas leaks. If you smell gas or hear a blowing or hissing noise, open a window and quickly leave the building. Turn off the gas using the outside main valve if you can and call the gas company from a remote location. If you turn off the gas for any reason, it must be turned back on by a professional.
Watch out for fallen power lines or broken gas lines and report them to the utility company immediately. Reporting potential hazards will get the utilities turned off as

quickly as possible, preventing further hazard and injury. Look for electrical system
damage. If you see sparks or broken or frayed wires, or if you smell burning insulation,
turn off the electricity at the main fuse box or circuit breaker. If you have to step in water
to get to the fuse box or circuit breaker, call an electrician first for advice. Electrical
equipment should be checked and dried before being returned to service.
If a tornado has resulted in a disaster and/or a SOLE (State of Local Emergency) has
been declared by an elected official, school administrators will obey the orders of the
Winnipeg Fire and Paramedic Service Incident Commander. The incident commander
may order an evacuation to a reception area, authorize or require persons to render first
aid or exercise other emergency powers.
It is very important for teachers, principals and other adult authority figures to set a calm
example for students at the disaster scene and reassure those who are shaken.
Use the telephone only for emergency calls. Telephone lines are frequently
overwhelmed in disaster situations. They need to be clear for emergency calls to get
through.
Enact the FAMILY REUNIFICATION PROCEDURES
Document all activities conducted during the tornado response:

- What went right and what went wrong?
- Can the plan be improved?
- Can other schools learn from your experience?

TORNADO PLAN – DETERMINING TORNADO SAFETY AREAS IN YOUR SCHOOL

Develop a good tornado safety plan tailored to your building design and ability to move people to safety zones as quickly as possible.

EXAMPLE - SEVERE WEATHER/TORNADO SAFETY LOCATIONS:

AREAS	LOCATION IN SCHOOL	CLASSROOMS/GROUPS
Area #1	Theatre space – curved wall hall	Daycare and Family Centre
	area by music room	
Area #2	Mini gym hallway – between double	Gym classes and music
	doors and kindergarten entry door	classes
Area #3	Girls/boys change rooms in mini	6BW/5/6L
	gym hallway	
Area #4	Grade 1D, 1F, Kindergarten Eng.	1D, 1F, Kindergarten Eng.
	hallway between double doors and	
	interior garden door	
Area #5	Grade 2T and Kindergarten FI	2T, Kindergarten FI
	hallway from double doors to hall	
	sink areas	
Area #6	Art room	4G, 4W, 5A
Area #7	EAL room by interior hall wall	EAL, 3V, 1L, 2S
Area #8	Mezzanine hall – blue Reading	Office staff to counsellor
	Recovery, counsellor office,	office
	women's & men's staff washrooms	Library, CSS, Rehab
		Assistant staff to blue room
		Librarian to take class to
		their own designated space

French to go to mini gym hall/washroom area or art room with class as listed.
Educational Assistants to stay with assigned class/students.
You do not need to call in with roll call for a severe weather drill, however, please
ensure all students are accounted for.
We will designate a weather watcher who will report if the storm is nearing and we will
communicate via PA or walkie-talkie with people coming to each station to provide
information to staff.
In an actual storm you are asked to stay in safe areas until you can safely be evacuated
from the building.

^{**}Insert school map here with tornado safety areas marked.

FAMILY REUNIFICATION PROCEDURES

PURPOSE:

The Family Reunification Procedure is used to ensure a safe and secure means of accounting for students and reuniting parents/guardians with their children whenever the school facility or grounds is rendered unsafe and a remote site is needed.

RESPONSIBILITIES:

Pr	incipal/Vice-principal/Designate:
	After consulting with an Emergency Incident Commander (police, fire or other emergency official), if applicable, determine the appropriate pre-designated relocation site(s).
	Follow pre-determined procedures for releasing students.
	Notify a contact person at the relocation site(s) to prepare for arrival of students.
	Designate a Reunification Site Commander.
	Request the Division Office to send personnel to staff the reunification site(s). Follow predetermined parental notification procedures such as phone trees, local media channels, automated alert system, cell or text messaging, etc.
Re	eunification Site Supervisor:
	Establish a command post.
	Organize public safety and mental health/crisis response staff who will be reporting to the site. Use them to calm waiting parents/guardians and explain that an orderly process is required for the safety of the students.
	Check identification of all non-uniformed personnel who arrive to assist.
	Secure a holding area for arriving students and staff away from waiting family members. Set up an adult report area for parents/guardians to sign-in and to check identification.
	Set up a student release area where students will be escorted to meet their parent/guardian and sign out.
	Set up a mental health area and direct staff to escort parent/guardian of any injured, missing or deceased student to the area for staff to provide notification in private away from other parents.
	Set up a media staging area and notify the school media liaison of the location. Keep evacuees on buses or in a holding area separate from parents until they can be signed out to waiting parents/guardians.
	Only release students to authorized persons after checking proof of identity and signing a student release form. Instruct parents/guardians to leave the site to make room for others once they have signed out their student.
Te	achers:
	Provide a list of evacuated students to the reunification site staff upon arrival.
	Ensure special needs students and staff are assisted.
	Request help if needed.
	Follow the instructions of the Reunification Site Commander or designated staff and/or assist in staffing the site.

OTHER PROCEDURES:			
	Outline procedures for releasing students.		
	Maintain current student and staff emergency information that details special needs, such as medical or custody issues.		
	Store information in a secure and readily accessible location. Outline parental notification methods.		