

Safety Toolbox Talks

Emergency Planning – Severe Weather

We are approaching severe weather season in Illinois. Below are some facts and helpful tips during severe weather. Please review your host facilities procedures for severe weather this week. Know where to go for shelter and what the alarms sound like so you can act quickly in the event of a severe weather alert. Office personnel can expect an emergency drill soon!

Radio Stations to monitor in Will County during severe weather are:

1. AM 1340, WJOL
2. FM 96.7, WSSR
3. FM 98.3, WCCQ
4. FM 100.7, WRXQ

Tornadoes

- A tornado is a violent, rotating column of air extending from a thunderstorm to the ground.
- Most tornado damage paths are less than 100 yards wide and a couple of miles long, but can be up to a mile wide and more than 60 miles long.
- **Most tornadoes occur between April 1 and June 30**, but they have occurred every month of the year, including early January of 2008.
- **A record number of tornadoes were reported in Illinois during 2006.** A total of 124 tornadoes occurred, which passed the mark of 120 set just three years prior in 2003. The tornadoes in 2006 resulted in 1 death and 49 injuries.
- Only **22 tornadoes** were reported in Illinois **during 2007**; however 3 people were injured as a result of two of these tornadoes (3/1/07 near Elwin, and 9/30/07 near Perry).
- There is an **average of 41 tornadoes** per year in Illinois.
- **Nearly 30% of all tornadoes in Illinois occur after dark.** It is **CRITICAL** that homes and businesses have someone monitor severe weather conditions – especially at night. A weather radio is an excellent way to do this.
- **Tornado Watch -- Tornadoes are possible.** Watch the sky and listen to the radio or television for more information. Be prepared to take shelter. If you see any rotating funnel-shaped clouds, report them immediately by telephone to your local law enforcement agency. **If you live in a mobile home, this is the time to move to a more substantial structure.**
- **Tornado Warning -- A tornado has been sighted or indicated by weather radar.** Take shelter immediately. Turn on a battery-operated radio or television and wait for updated information for your area.

DURING A TORNADO

Take the following actions when a Tornado Warning has been issued by the National Weather Service, when sirens have been activated, or when a tornado has been sighted near your area.

WORKPLACE

- Go to the designated storm shelter, basement, or to an inside hallway on the lowest level.
- Avoid places with wide-span roofs, such as auditoriums, cafeterias, gymnasiums and large hallways. Stay away from windows and open spaces.
- Get under a piece of sturdy furniture, such as a workbench, heavy table or desk, and hold onto it. If sturdy furniture is not available, make yourself the smallest target possible. Squat low to the ground. Put your head down and cover your head and neck with your hands.
- If in a high-rise building, go to small, interior rooms or hallways on the lowest level possible and seek protection as detailed above. Stay away from windows and outside walls.

OUTDOORS

- If possible, get inside a substantial building, on the lowest floor – away from windows and doors.
- If an indoor shelter is not available, or there is no time to get indoors, lie in a ditch or culvert.
- Use your arms to protect your head and neck. Stay aware of the potential for flash flooding.

IN A VEHICLE

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- Never try to outrun a tornado in a vehicle. Heavy rain, hail and traffic may impede your movement. Tornadoes can change directions quickly and can easily lift up a vehicle and toss it through the air.
- Get out of the vehicle immediately and try to take shelter in a nearby building. Do NOT park or take shelter under a bridge or overpass.
- If there isn't time to get indoors, get out of the vehicle and lie in a ditch, culvert or low-lying area away from the vehicle.

Thunderstorms

- **Severe thunderstorms can produce tornadoes, damaging winds, lightning, hail or heavy rain.**
- In Illinois, severe thunderstorms frequently occur in the late afternoon or evening.
- **Most lightning deaths occur under or near trees and in open fields.**
- There have been 27 people killed by lightning in Illinois since 1990.
- The largest hailstone to recently affect Illinois fell near the town of Hudson, in McLean County, where grapefruit sized hail (4.25" diameter) was reported on July 13, 2004.
- **Severe Thunderstorm Watch** -- Severe thunderstorms are possible. Watch the sky and listen to the radio or television for more information. Be prepared to take shelter.
- **Severe Thunderstorm Warning** -- Severe thunderstorms are occurring. Take shelter. Turn on a battery-operated radio or television to receive warnings and severe weather statements.

DURING THUNDERSTORMS

- Close all windows and doors. Draw the shades or blinds to reduce the risk from flying glass if window or door glass breaks due to high winds.
- Monitor the radio or television for the latest weather information.
- Avoid using a corded telephone or other electrical appliances until the storm passes. Turn off air conditioners. If lightning strikes, a power surge could damage the compressor.
- Delay taking baths or showers until after the storm passes.
- If outdoors, seek shelter IMMEDIATELY! If you can hear thunder, you are probably close enough to the storm to be struck by lightning.
- If you are in a boat when a thunderstorm threatens, you should attempt to reach shore as quickly as possible.
- If you are driving, pull safely to the shoulder away from trees and power lines. Lightning can flash from trees or power poles and strike a vehicle. The rubber tires do NOT keep lightning from striking a vehicle. Normally, in the open, a vehicle is a safe shelter from lightning. Avoid touching metal parts of the vehicle when lightning is nearby.
- If you find yourself in a position where there is no immediate shelter available, find a low spot away from trees and power poles.



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BRIESER CONSTRUCTION SAFETY MEETING

Week of: _____

Job Number: _____

Date: _____

Job Name: _____

Superintendent: _____

Site Specific Topics:

Crew Safety

Recommendations: _____

Reviewed MSDS #: _____ Subject: _____

Meeting Attended By: (Print your Name)

Supervisor/Foreman: _____