



Worksite: \_\_\_\_\_ Instructor: \_\_\_\_\_ Date/Time: \_\_\_\_\_

## Topic C861: Severe Weather (B)

**Introduction:** Severe weather affects employees of all industries. It is important to understand and follow your company's safety procedures in the event of severe weather. Taking safety precautions and implementing awareness will mitigate damages to personnel and property. The following information will provide actions employees should take under severe weather conditions.

*Understand* the difference between a severe weather watch, and a severe weather warning:

A **watch** indicates that conditions are right for the development of dangerous weather. For weather events that pass relatively quickly, such as flash floods, severe thunderstorms or tornadoes, a watch means that odds are in favor of the development of these events. A watch referring to prolonged events such as hurricanes or winter storms suggests that the storm is either highly likely or in the process of developing, but is not yet an immediate threat. Prepare for either degree of weather event by implementing a work safety and/or evacuation plan and keep up with the weather.

*Typically, weather forecasters are able to predict the development of severe weather several days before it arrives. Various media sources, such as the television, the radio, newspapers and the National Weather Service, offer reliable weather forecasts. Make a habit of keeping yourself up to date on weather predictions so that you are always prepared.*

A **warning** means that severe weather is actually occurring in the area. For example, a tornado warning would mean that spotters or weather radar have visual confirmation of a tornado having developed. At this point, action should be taken immediately at your work site, such as evacuation or transportation to a safe shelter location. Continue to use a battery-operated radio in order to keep informed of weather development and recession.

**Taking action:** Individual companies often have their own severe weather safety procedures. Make sure that you are well informed of these procedures, and of the layout of your work site. If you aren't sure of where to go or how to protect yourself in the event of a threatening storm, speak with your supervisor or an on-site safety manager.

*Should severe weather occur while you are working outdoors*, evacuate the location immediately and go to a secure building, preferably one with a below-ground level. In the event of a more imminent threat, such as a tornado, find a low-lying area or a ditch in which to lie down and use your arms to cover and protect your head and neck. Contrary to popular believe, seeking shelter beneath a bridge or an overpass during a tornado is NOT safe. In all types of severe weather, take the following tips into consideration:

- Shut down and disconnect electrical devices if possible to prevent surge fires.
- If taking shelter indoors, go to the lowest possible level of the building and position yourself beneath a stable structure, such as a piece of furniture, in the center of the room. Put as many walls as possible between you and the outside, and stay away from doors and windows.
- Outdoors, make sure to avoid trees, electrical power lines, utility poles, or any other structure that could collapse under severe conditions.
- Stay away from vehicles. In the event of high-powered winds, they can be moved or overturned and become a safety hazard themselves.
- If you are in a vehicle when severe weather hits, move to shelter immediately. Should a tornado be spotted in your vicinity, leave the vehicle, and move far from its parked location. Do not try to outrun a tornado.

**Conclusion:** Avoid injury from severe weather by keeping yourself informed of current weather information and forecasts, and by knowing your company's severe weather shelter and evacuation procedures.

**Employee Attendance:** (Names or signatures of personnel who are attending this meeting)

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*These guidelines do not supersede local, state, or federal regulations and must not be construed as a substitute for, or legal interpretation of, any OSHA regulations.*