

Plan Now What To Do During A Tornado Warning

Last month, twenty-three people were killed when a mile-wide tornado struck Lee County, east of Montgomery. Damage from the EF-4 class tornado stretched for 24 miles, and news reports showed empty concrete slabs next to swimming pools where brick houses once stood. At least four other tornadoes hit Alabama the same day.

The bad news is that 'tornado season' has just begun.

Hartselle Fire Chief Daryl Fox urges residents to be ready should a tornado or severe storm strike our area. "I encourage every family to have an emergency plan," he says. "What will you do if a violent storm or tornado is spotted near your home?"



One of the homes destroyed by a category EF-4 tornado in Lee County on March 3, 2019.

(Photo courtesy of the National Weather Service)

should always take immediate action when a tornado warning is issued or you hear tornado sirens.

Forecasters do their best to predict storms, however, tornadoes occasionally develop without detection, and those that are spotted are unpredictable. Never rely solely on weather forecasters and authorities to keep you and your family safe; in stormy weather stay aware of conditions where you are.

Tornado Warning vs Watch

Advanced warning that a tornado is approaching your area can give you the time needed to move to a safe place. The National Weather Service (NWS) issues tornado alerts when weather conditions mean that tornadoes are more likely. In case of a **tornado watch**, tune in to local weather reports and check alert notifications; review your plan to get to a safe location quickly; charge your cell phone in case the power goes out; and call anyone who may need assistance.



In the case of a **tornado warning**, you should take action immediately to move to a safe location.

Even if you have been through a tornado warning in the past without any damage, you

Make Decisions Now To Stay Safe Later

Do not wait for a tornado warning to decide where you and your family will seek protection, Fox urges. Having a plan for how and where you will take cover in case of a storm – and practicing your plan – may save lives, especially if you have children.

When inclement weather approaches, know how you will stay informed; news and alerts will help you know when to take action.

- Monitor local weather reports.
- On Twitter or Facebook, follow the Hartselle Police Department (@HartsellePD) or Morgan County Emergency Management Agency (@morgancoema) for alerts.
- Consider buying a NOAA Weather Radio, which receives broadcast alerts directly from NWS.
- In case of a power outage, have extra batteries, a battery-operated radio, and keep your cell phone charged.

Decide where you will take cover at every place you spend a lot of time, including your home, work and place of worship.

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Automatic Bank Draft: The Easiest Way to Pay Your Utility Bill

Tired of writing a check to Hartselle Utilities every month, and want a free way to pay your utility bill? Consider enrolling in our automatic Bank Draft Plan.

"When you enroll in the Bank Draft Plan, you can set it and forget it," says HU Customer Service Manager Terri Harris. "You'll never have to worry about late utility bills again. And you can cancel at any time."

When you enroll in Bank Draft, the amount of your bill is automatically deducted from your bank account on the day it is due each month. You still receive your utility bill each month as usual, and the

message "Paid by Bank Draft" will appear on your bill.

To enroll in the program, complete an enrollment form and bring it or mail it to HU along with a voided check. It takes about two minutes to enroll, and costs absolutely nothing. The form is on our website (go to www.hartselleutilities.com > Information > Automatic Bank Draft), available in our office, or we can mail you a form.

For more information and to request an enrollment form, call HU at (256) 773-3340 or send an email to Customer Service at inquiries@hartselleutilities.org.

Tornado Warning *continued from front*

As the images from the Lee County tornadoes illustrate, many homes and buildings could be completely destroyed if hit directly by an EF-3, EF-4 or EF-5 category tornado. If you spend time in locations that do not offer adequate protection, such as a mobile home or an open floorplan house, office, gym or retail store, plan ahead and be ready to move to a different location if needed.

If a tornado watch has been issued and school is not in session, the storm shelter at Hartselle High School on Bethel Road will be opened to the public. Generally, school officials have advance warning of a watch being issued, and try to let school out at least an hour in advance so that the school is clear of students. Local authorities issue media alerts when the shelter at the high school is open.

If you decide to stay where you are, in a sturdy building there may be areas which may provide protection in the event of a lower-grade tornado. A key thing to remember, says Fox, is to keep as many floors and walls between you and the storm as possible.

Plan to go to a small interior, windowless room, such as a closet or bathroom. This room should be on the lowest level of the building, and underground if possible. Protect yourself from potential falling or wind-borne debris with a mattress, cushions, sleeping bag or blanket.

In the event a tornado actually hits your location, use the tornado drill position taught for decades in schools: kneel down on your knees, bend over into a ball, and cover your head and neck with your arms.

As always, if your power goes out, call Hartselle Utilities at (256) 773-3340 (after hours: (256) 773-2533). Don't assume that 'someone else' has called, or that we already know. Phone calls help us pinpoint exact locations of outages, which helps to restore power as quickly as possible.

Summer Wastewater Fees Capped Beginning in May

Typically, most of the water a household uses enters the sewer system as waste, so HU uses each customer's water bill to calculate their sewer fees. During the summer months, residents generally use more water outdoors and this water does not enter the sewer system. HU sets a cap for the summer sewer rates at 120 percent of the average of each customer's winter usage. From May 1 to October 31, customers are not charged a sewer fee for water used above the cap.

Hartselle Recycling Calendar

Here are the next four months of Hartselle's Recycling Calendar. If you have a question about recycling, visit hartselle.org or call Public Works at (256) 773-2643.

April '19							May '19						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa	Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
31	1	2	3	4	5	6				1	2	3	4
7	8	9	10	11	12	13	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
28	29	30					26	27	28	29	30	31	

June '19							July '19						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa	Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
						1	30	1	2	3	4	5	6
2	3	4	5	6	7	8	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
9	10	11	12	13	14	15	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	21	22	23	24	25	26	27
23	24	25	26	27	28	29	28	29	30	31			

ZONE 1-A	ZONE 2-A
ZONE 1-B	ZONE 2-B
ZONE 3-A	ZONE 4-A
ZONE 3-B	ZONE 4-B

For the full Recycling Pickup Calendar and Zone Map, visit hartselle.org

24 HOURS

of Saving Energy for Earth Day

Celebrate Earth Day all day on Monday, April 22 with these tips to help you save water & energy.

- 9PM** Taking a 10-minute shower instead of a bath saves water and energy
- 11PM** Turn down your thermostat while you're sleeping
- 6AM** Keep the refrigerator door closed as you make breakfast
- 7AM** Cold outside? Open the drapes and let the sun help warm the room
- 8AM** Turn off the lights before you leave the house
- 7PM** Doing laundry? Using cold water whenever you can saves energy
- 6PM** Wait to run the dishwasher until you have a full load
- 5PM** Change your air filters monthly to keep your cooling & heating equipment efficient
- 4PM** Buy energy efficient CFL & LED light bulbs
- 1PM** Don't waste water! Check faucets for leaks
- 12PM** Going out for lunch? Put your computer and monitor to sleep while you're away
- 11AM** Reduce 'standby power.' Use a power strip to turn off the TV when you're not watching

Have a non-emergency question or a question about your bill? Email us at inquiries@hartselleutilities.org. We try to respond to billing and general questions within 24 hours; service issues that need investigation may take up to 48 hours. **To report a gas leak, sewer backup or power outage, call our office.** Our phones are answered 24 hours a day, seven days a week. During business hours (M-F, 7:30 am - 4:30 pm), call (256) 773-3340. After hours, call (256) 773-2533 or (256) 773-2588.

SMELL GAS? ACT FAST!

256-773-2533 or 911



The Hartselle Connection is published quarterly by Hartselle Utilities.

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