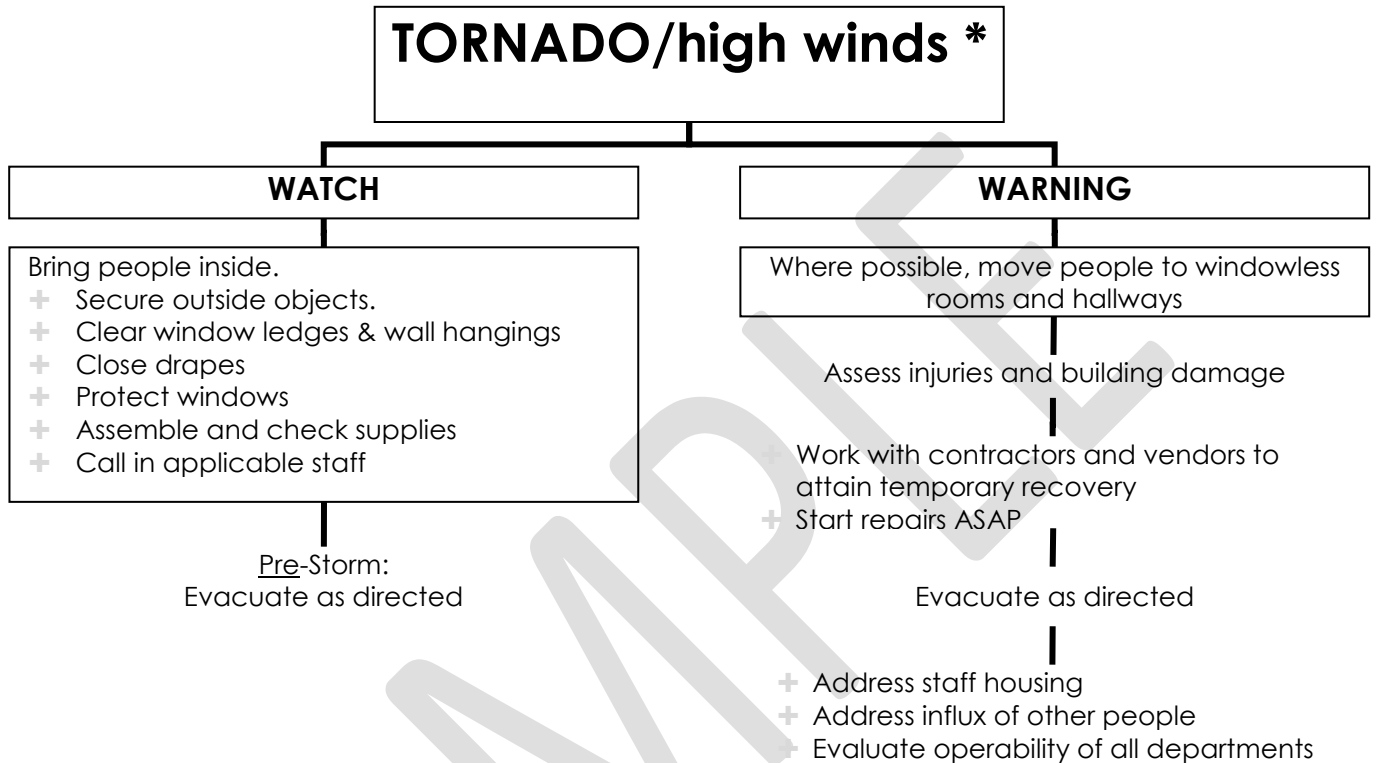


# HANDOUT #7

Emergency Operations Planning  
Tornado / High Winds (Sample Procedure)



\* Update per your final plan

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### TORNADO WATCH

#### GENERAL ACTIONS APPLICABLE TO ALL DEPARTMENTS AND STAFF

- + Monitor on-going weather conditions and reports. Monitor via the radio, television, internet, and/or weather radio (*insert appropriate monitoring services in your area*).
- + Review locations and quantities of emergency supplies for possible use (i.e. linens, water, food, medical supplies, pharmaceuticals, flashlights, batteries, etc.).
- + If there is adequate time to respond, request/obtain additional supplies as appropriate.
- + Identify safe areas (inside hallways and windowless rooms) within the building where patients and staff could be placed during a Tornado Warning.

#### ADMINISTRATION / INCIDENT COMMANDER

- + Activate the Incident Command System and establish a Command Center to monitor and manage the situation.
- + Monitor ongoing weather conditions and reports. Monitor via the radio, television, internet, and/or weather radio.
- + Communicate throughout the building/campus that a "tornado watch" is in effect. Provide continual updates on weather conditions and reports.
- + Ensure all departments/units have tornado procedures available for review and implementation.
- + Consider the need to alter current staffing. Monitor shift changes. Encourage staff to remain in the building if exterior conditions may be dangerous.

#### ENGINEERING / MAINTENANCE / ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

- + Conduct a sweep of the exterior of the building/campus. Where practical, secure items that could serve as projectiles in a tornado or high wind situation (i.e. chairs, tables, trash receptacles, signs, etc.).
- + Where applicable, temporarily remove or secure exterior canopies, antennas and satellite dishes.
- + Isolate or remove any chemicals that can react violently with each other (refer to MSDS).
- + Review how to shut down utilities should it be necessary. Ensure necessary tools and utility shut-off procedures are available.
- + Inspect the generator and generator transfer switch(s). Assess battery lighting.
- + Time permitting, top off generator fuel if necessary.
- + Ensure that all exterior doors and windows are latched.
- + Determine the need to cover or tape any unique door/window assemblies.
- + Brace large doors at shipping and receiving docks.
- + Ensure that roof and outdoor drains are free from debris in order to handle heavy rains.
- + Fill tubs and sinks with water.
- + Consider enhancing on-site staffing.

#### NURSING

- + Conduct a sweep of the exterior of the building/campus and bring all patients, visitors and staff back into the building.
- + Close all windows, window curtains / blinds, and cubicle curtains.
- + Remove items from window ledges and pictures from walls. Remove other items that may serve as a projective within a room. Secure items in closets or other enclosed spaces.
- + Place beds in low position.
- + Consider enhancing on-site staffing.

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### TORNADO WARNING

#### GENERAL ACTIONS APPLICABLE TO ALL DEPARTMENTS AND STAFF

- + Closely monitor weather reports, tornado warning areas, and information on tornado location(s) and predicted paths. Monitor via the radio, television, internet, and/or weather radio.
- + If the building is in or near the projected path of a tornado, place patients into corridors and/or windowless rooms.

#### ADMINISTRATION / INCIDENT COMMANDER

- + Closely monitor weather reports, tornado warning areas, and information on tornado location(s) and predicted paths. Monitor via the radio, television, internet, and/or weather radio.
- + Communicate throughout the building/campus that a "tornado warning" is in effect. Provide continual updates on whether or not a tornado is anticipated to affect the building/campus.
- + If the building is in or near the projected path of a tornado, instruct staff to place patients into corridors and/or windowless rooms.

#### NURSING

- + Place patients into internal corridors or windowless rooms if time permits.
- + If patients are sitting in chairs, place a pillow on their laps. For patients who must be in the prone position, slide the patient and mattress to the floor.
- + If moving all patients is not practical, cover them with blankets, pillows, etc. to provide protection from flying debris.

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### Emergency Operations Planning Tornado / High Winds (Sample Procedure)

## RECOVERY

### ADMINISTRATION / INCIDENT COMMANDER

- + Communicate with local emergency services regarding your status and needs.
- + Request an assessment of the structure.
- + Activate the Full Building Evacuation Plan if the structure can no longer support patient care.
- + Assess departmental operations.
- + Assess staffing needs. Initiate disaster staffing procedures as necessary.
- + Assess communication abilities and needs.
- + Prepare communications to families and media regarding facility status.
- + Determine what other procedures may need to be implemented. This may include (but not limited to):
  - Loss of HVAC (air conditioning or heating)
  - Loss of Water
  - Loss of Cooking
  - Loss of Commercial Power / Loss of Emergency Power
  - Loss of Communications
  - Loss of Sewer (Toilet)
  - Loss of Natural Gas
  - Contamination of The Outside Air (*exterior fire or other contaminant that may force the containment of the building – HVAC, etc.*)
  - Hazardous Materials / Chemical Spill
  - Disaster Staffing

### ENGINEERING / MAINTENANCE / ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

- + Secure utilities as necessary.
- + Perform an immediate assessment of structural damage in the area. Report findings to the Command Center.
- + Monitor emergency generator if it is being utilized.

### NURSING

- + Perform an immediate assessment of patients, visitors and staff for injuries.
- + Triage and treat as appropriate.
- + Move patients away from damaged areas as best as possible.
- + Report status and resource needs to the Command Center.

### GENERAL

- + Follow all other facility-wide and department-specific Recovery Plans and Continuity of Operations Plans (COOP).

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### DEFINITIONS

#### **National Weather Service (NWS):**

An organization of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association (NOAA) that provides weather, hydrologic, and climate forecasts and warnings for the protection of life and property and the enhancement of the national economy.

#### **High Wind Warning:**

Issued by the NWS when high wind speeds may pose a hazard or be considered life threatening. The criteria for this warning varies from state to state. In many states, the criteria is sustained non-convective (not related to thunderstorms) winds greater than or equal to 40 mph lasting for one hour or longer, or winds greater than or equal to 58 mph for any duration.

#### **Tornado Watch:**

Issued by the NWS to alert the public that conditions are favorable for the development of tornadoes in and close to the watch area. These watches are issued with information concerning the watch area and the length of time they are in effect.

#### **Tornado Warning:**

Issued by the NWS to warn the public that a tornado has been sighted by storm spotters, law enforcement, or has been indicated by radar. These warnings are issued with information concerning where the tornado is presently located and which communities are in the anticipated path of the tornado.

SAMPLE