

## FORT McCOY INCLEMENT WEATHER GUIDE

**1. GENERAL.** Being prepared to face weather hazards requires planning and forethought. Use the Army Risk Management process to help you prepare for any weather emergency. Make sure that you and everyone in your family knows what to do in weather emergencies by discussing what you are going to do, and by practicing.



### 2. SNOW STORMS AND ICY

**CONDITIONS.** In this area of Wisconsin, severe cold, snow, and ice are the norm during the winter. Hazards resulting from these weather conditions include, hypothermia, frostbite, death by freezing, slips and falls on ice and snow, and traffic accidents.

To prevent hypothermia and frost bite, wear clothing appropriate to the weather. Layered clothing will retain body heat. Wear clothing that breathes so your body moisture can evaporate rather than freeze.

Stay indoors when the weather is extremely cold.

In blizzard conditions, stay out of the weather until the storm passes. Check your phone for a dial tone frequently. If you live in an isolated area, consider getting a cell phone or other communication device. Keep at least three days of food and water available at all times during the winter in case you cannot get out. Never go out when conditions are such that you cannot see adequately. Remain at home.

In the winter, keep walks and crossings clear of ice and snow. In work places, have a roster of personnel responsible for clearing walks and crossings. Use salt and sand to increase traction and melt ice.

Slow down when driving. Black ice, snow, slush, and icy bridges are all hazards best overcome by slower speeds.

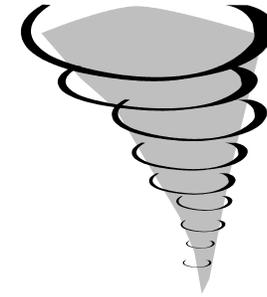
Keep a survival kit in your car. Keep your vehicle filled with gas so it will be there if you need it. It should include, a shovel, two bags filled with sand and salt, a thermal blanket, and a flashlight with fresh batteries. A cell phone is recommended. A supply of nutrition rich granola bars or candy bars is also recommended.

**3. TORNADOS.** Planning and rehearsing to react to a tornado is critical to being

able to respond quickly to these dangerous events.

High winds that can throw debris, destroy buildings, and carry off vehicles are the principle hazards.

To prepare for tornado emergencies, first, identify your shelter – that place you go when tornados are imminent. Basements and other underground structures are the



best shelters. If there is no basement, your shelter should be on the ground floor of the building. Windowless rooms such as closets, hallways, or bathrooms are the best choice if no basement is available. Get under a piece of sturdy furniture like a workbench, heavy table, or desk and hold on to it.

Mobile homes are particularly vulnerable to a tornado's high winds. If you live in a mobile home, consider evacuating to a friends house or a public building to shelter from danger when a tornado warning is issued. If a tornado is approaching and you

cannot get to a shelter building, leave the trailer, lie in a ditch or low-lying area a safe distance away from your trailer.

If you are in a car when a tornado approaches, stop the car and take shelter in a nearby building. If there is no time to get indoors, lie in a ditch or low-lying area away from the vehicle until the tornado passes. Never try to out drive a tornado because they can change directions rapidly and lift and toss a vehicle with little warning.

All of Fort McCoy's buildings have signs indicating the building shelter areas. Barracks, BOQ rooms, and other billeting buildings also contain signs indicating the location of tornado shelters in the building.

Tornados are spawned from thunderstorms. Whenever the weather conditions are right for a thunderstorm, turn on a radio or television and pay attention to the forecast. If tornados are a possibility, prepare yourself to move to your shelter quickly if a warning is sounded.

Fort McCoy has recently installed an emergency warning siren system. **The emergency siren system will sound a three minute long steady tone when a tornado is in the area. When you hear this signal you should immediately proceed to your designated shelter.** After the tornado danger is passed an all-clear signal will be sounded. The all-clear signal

is a 16 second slow wail followed by an 8 second burst.



**4. THUNDERSTORMS.** These storms are common throughout the spring and summer months.

Thunderstorms often have high winds, hail, driving rain that limits visibility, and, of course, lightning hazards.

When a thunderstorm approaches, get indoors. This will protect you from being hit by hail or by flying debris. Thunderstorms can produce very high winds, so consider moving to your designated tornado shelter if the winds are very high.

If driving a car, pull over on the shoulder when driving conditions become severe. The periods of heavy rains and high wind seldom last more than 15 minutes in a thunderstorm. If you wait out this danger period, you can usually proceed with little danger. Avoid parking your car under big trees that may fall during high winds.

If you cannot reach a building for shelter and are overtaken by a thunderstorm, lessen the chances of being struck by staying away from tall trees that stand alone in the open and large metal objects. Stay away from power line and telephone poles also, especially those with transformers.

Crouch down and wait out the storm. Do not sit or lie down. If you are in a group separate yourselves from one another by 10 meters to reduce the likelihood of more than one person being injured.

Listen to a battery powered radio for tornado warnings or watches, but do not use the phone during a thunderstorm.

Keep a supply of flashlights or candles for emergencies at home in case the lights go out.

**5. FLOODS.** Floods are a danger everywhere. Hazards associated with floods are water damage to property, disease resulting from sewage overflow, injuries from exposure to hazardous materials in the water, and drowning deaths.

Many houses are built in flood plains, and they can be endangered during periods of intense rainfall due to flash flooding.

Pay attention to flash flood warnings and watches when announced on the radio or TV.

Have a plan for reaching higher ground. As soon as a watch is posted, evacuate to a safe location. Have a route to the evacuation point planned out before hand.

Flooding across roadways is common during flash floods. Never try to cross flooded areas either on foot or in a car. Find another way around or wait for the water to go down. Be mindful of electrical hazards especially in basements that get flooded. Never enter a flooded basement until the electrical company has turned off the power to the house.

Be aware of natural gas build-up in basements when the pilot light on furnaces or water heaters goes out. Supply valves on newer furnaces and hot water heaters will automatically shut off if the pilot light goes out, but if you smell gas coming from the basement of a flooded house, evacuate immediately until the gas company turns off the gas outside.

**6. CONCLUSION.** Ultimately your survival depends on you and the preparation you do before a weather event occurs. Forethought and planning can prepare you for any weather emergency. Risk management can help you determine what the hazards are and what you can do to prevent them from turning into tragic consequences.

This guide provides only general answers to weather hazard questions. Your

circumstances may involve other hazards that are not discussed here. Be aware of that and use risk management to create a specific weather plan for your family.