



READY RACINE

SUMMER/FALL 2019 Volume 14, Issue 3

Racine County
Office
of
Emergency Management

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Mission

To assist
the community
in mitigating
known hazards and
in preparing for,
responding to,
surviving and
recovering from
both natural and
man-made
disasters.

STRAIGHT LINE WINDS OR TORNADO?



Shortly after 5 p.m. on July 2, a severe storm blew through the north side of the city of Racine. Trees were uprooted, branches snapped off and power lines were down. Debris was everywhere and streets were blocked off, but the damage itself was isolated to a relatively small area that went from Michigan Boulevard to Douglas Avenue and from Melvin Avenue to about 3 Mile Road.

For many affected, though, it was overwhelming, and several residents remarked, "It had to have been a tornado!"

According to the National Weather Service (NWS), it was not a tornado. Instead, a thunderstorm "popped up" quickly, producing a microburst that caused extensive damage. High winds, associated with severe thunderstorms, can cause more damage than tornadoes and we have seen that many times in Racine County over the past 30 years.

On July 19, a line of severe thunderstorms rolled through north central Wis-

consin. The NWS reported that the worst damage appears to have been associated with a "macroburst," a large downburst of straight-line winds that affected Langlade and Oconto counties. Many tens of thousands of trees were snapped or uprooted, resulting in damage to dozens of homes and cottages. Winds were probably over 100 mph in this area.

Tim Halbach, Acting Meteorologist-in-



STRAIGHT LINE WINDS CONT.

Charge/Warning Coordination Meteorologist, commented, "Tornadoes always get the story over straight line winds...Straight line winds can be stronger than a tornado. Many times while doing straight line wind damage surveys, people will complain that 'there wasn't a warning' while a Severe Thunderstorm Warning had been issued well in advance."

While tornadoes are nature's most violent storm, severe thunderstorms, with winds in excess of 50 mph, can cause just as much damage as a tornado -- sometimes more so. In addition, lightning is a leading cause of injury and death.

Therefore, when the NWS issues a severe thunderstorm warning, take it seriously! That means take extra precautions, including seeking out a safe place in a sturdy building.

During the July 2 microburst, large trees did fall on houses and there were several reports of damage occurring inside homes. As during a tornado warning, it doesn't hurt to

seek out shelter on the lowest floor possible, preferably the basement.

When Severe Thunderstorm Warnings are issued, Ready.Gov offers these tips:

- ◆ When thunder roars, go indoors. A sturdy building is the safest place to be during a thunderstorm.
- ◆ Pay attention to weather reports and warnings of thunderstorms. Be ready to change plans.
- ◆ If indoors, avoid running water or using landline phones. Electricity can travel through plumbing and phone lines.

- ◆ Protect your property. Unplug appliances and other electric devices. Secure outside furniture.
- ◆ If boating or swimming, get to land and find a sturdy, grounded shelter or vehicle immediately.
- ◆ If necessary, take shelter in a car with a metal top and sides. Do not touch anything metal.
- ◆ Avoid flooded roadways. Turn Around. Don't Drown! Just six inches of fast-moving water can knock you down, and one foot of moving water can sweep your vehicle away.



10 POINT PLAN TO PREPARE YOUR BUSINESS

According to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), almost 40 percent of small businesses never reopen their doors after a disaster. The number 1 reason? They are not prepared.

Businesses can be affected both directly and indirectly by disasters. During the 2017 Burlington floods, there were some businesses that were closed because of flooding. However, there were also businesses who were closed because of power outages resulting from flooding.

Being prepared can make the difference whether your business recovers. On November 21, 2010, a tornado hit the Village of Union Grove. Grove Gear, a local company, took a direct hit. 30,000 sq. ft of roofing was ripped off and all the offices (sales, purchasing and engineering) were destroyed.

The company suffered \$1.4 million in damages (not including business interruption) but they recovered! Although they would not be back into their offices until January 2011, they were shipping within 48 hours.

Every business, large or small, should have both an emergency response plan and a business recovery plan. While it may seem like a large task, there are templates available, which will provide a starting point. The key is modifying the plans to fit your unique situation.

Here are ten steps that you can take to be prepared:

#1 Create a Planning Team: You will need buy-in from both upper management and those who will be tasked

10 POINT PLAN TO PREPARE YOUR BUSINESS

with implementing the plan. Put together a planning team from all facets of your operation.

#2 Identify Risks and Hazards/ Rate Vulnerabilities: Create a list of hazards, rank the likelihood of each occurring and the potential impact it would have on your operations. The Red Cross has a program, Ready Rating, which can help you evaluate some of your most critical strengths and weaknesses.

www.ReadyRating.org

#4 Develop Emergency Action

Checklists: Put together an emergency response plan with simple to follow checklists which outline how employees and visitors should respond to various emergency situations.

#5 Employee Training: In addition to training your employees on the emergency response plan, consider offering training on first aid, basic life support, Stop the Bleed, disaster and

CERT. A trained workforce can help save lives.

#6 Practice The Plan: Conduct drills to test the plan. During the 9/11 attacks on the World Trade Center, most people got alive because they knew what the plan was and had practiced it.

#7 Determine Essential Business

Functions: What do you do? Who does it? List the critical functions that must be carried out regardless of the situation and who is responsible.

#8 Vital Records Protection: What vital records are you required to maintain? Do you have copies of these records? Are they stored off-site and/or in the "cloud"? Maintain a list of these records and where they can be found.

#9 Insurance Coverage: Make sure you have adequate insurance coverage. Review your policies with your agent and identify alternate types of

insurance to cover gaps, including business interruption and flood insurance.

#10 Cybersecurity Measures: As we become more dependent on computers, smart phones and the internet, our vulnerability to a cyber attack increases. Have you implanted sound cyber security measures? Is your anti-virus software current? Is your system backed up and data stored off-site? Take the time to educate your employees on safe Internet use and how to harden systems against attacks.

The Institute for Business and Home Safety has a tool kit to help businesses create a continuity plan. OFB-EZ (Open for Business-EZ) is a free toolkit designed to help small businesses plan for any type of business interruption, so they can quickly reopen and resume operations following a disaster. For more information, go to <https://disastersafety.org/business-protection/ofb-ez/>

STAYING SAFE: SCHOOL BUS SAFETY

Each month the Racine County Traffic Safety Commission brings a different safety message through the "Staying Safe" program. The focus in August is "School Bus Safety."

As school starts up, it is important to be aware of small children waiting for the bus, as well as school busses that are picking up and dropping off students.

Slow down and observe the rules of the road. Use your turn signals, don't run red lights and don't pass a bus. According to the WI Department of Transportation, the majority of

school bus crashes are cited as the fault of the other vehicle's driver and the persons most likely to be injured in a school bus crash are drivers and passengers of vehicles that strike the bus or are struck by the bus.

Small vehicles do not do well in a crash with a big yellow bus or any other big vehicle, and should be driven accordingly.

When you see the flashing red lights of a school bus, drivers coming from both directions must stop at least 20 feet from the bus and wait until the

flashing red lights are turned off! The exception-if it is a divided highway, a vehicle coming from the opposite directions need not stop.

For this and other tips, go to: <https://racinecounty.com/government/>



PREPARED, NOT SCARED. BE READY FOR DISASTERS

September is National Preparedness Month and the theme this year is **Prepared, Not Scared. Be Ready for Disasters!** Each week there will be a different emphasis. They are:

Save Early for Disaster Costs

Did you know that 40 percent of Americans don't have \$400 in savings? What would you do if there is a disaster? Set aside a small amount from each paycheck to go into a "rainy day" fund to cover unexpected expenses when disaster strikes your home! And make sure you are adequately insured. Most homeowners' and renters' insurance does not cover flood damage so get Flood Insurance today!

Make a Plan to Prepare for Disasters

Preparing your family for an emer-

gency is as simple as a conversation over dinner. Include your kids in emergency planning. Review your family emergency plan together so they know what to do if you're not there. And practice your plan-hold fire and tornado drills!

Teach Kids to Prepare for Disasters

Teach children what to do in an emergency if they are at home or away. Help your kids know how to communicate during an emergency-sending text messages, emergency contact numbers and dialing 9-1-1.

Review your family emergency communications plan with kids. Get the kids involved in building their own emergency

kit and if they're old enough, sign them up for a First Aid/CPR class.

Get Involved in Your Community's Preparedness Efforts

Learn about the hazards most likely to affect your community and plan accordingly. Consider volunteering with some of our community organizations like the Fire Bells, Red Cross, Salvation Army, Neighborhood Watch or Team Rubicon. And check in neighbors to see how you can help each other out before and after an emergency.



DISASTER SONG PLAYLIST

We're crankin' up the tunes in the EOC and here are some of our favorite Disaster related songs!

- ◆ Against the Wind (Bob Seger)
- ◆ Beautiful Disaster (Kelly Clarkson)
- ◆ Cloudy (Simon and Garfunkel)
- ◆ Dark Storm on the Horizon (Ben E. King)
- ◆ Flashlight (Parliament)
- ◆ Heat of the Night (Bryan Adams)
- ◆ Kentucky Rain (Elvis Presley)
- ◆ Little Rain (Rolling Stones)
- ◆ Riders on the Storm (Doors)
- ◆ Spy in the House of Love (Was Not Was)
- ◆ Stormy Monday (Eric Clapton)
- ◆ Summer in the City (Lovin' Spoonful)
- ◆ The Final Countdown (Europe)
- ◆ Windy (The Association)

What's your favorite jam? Let us know and maybe we will add it to our list!

STAY INFORMED

There are a number of ways in which you can stay informed and involved with Racine County Emergency Management. In addition to our quarterly Ready Racine newsletters, you can learn more about RCOEM by:

- Visiting our website: <http://readyracineco.com>
- Download the Ready Badger App: <http://appfactoryuwp.com/projects.php>
- Visiting our Facebook page: www.facebook.com/readyracineco
- Submitting your questions and concerns to rcemergencymanagement@racinecounty.com
- Volunteering with Racine County Emergency Management

