



ALLEGANY COUNTY, MARYLAND

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ALLEGANY COUNTY GOVERNMENT

NEWS RELEASE

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Allegany County Department of Emergency Services

Tornado Safety

Tornado intensity was measured by the ***Fujita scale*** until 2007 when it was replaced by the ***Enhanced Fujita scale***, adopted to more accurately reflect the wind speed necessary to cause a defined level of damage. The chart below shows the wind speed ranges of the original Fujita Scale compared to the Enhanced Fujita Scale.

Fujita Scale		Enhanced Fujita Scale		Enhanced Fujita Scale Level of Damage
Category	Wind Speed Range (mph)	Category	Wind Speed Range (mph)	
F0	40-72	EF0	65-85	Minor or no damage
F1	73-112	EF1	86-110	Moderate damage (roofs stripped; windows broken)
F2	113-157	EF2	111-135	Considerable damage (roofs torn off; mobile homes destroyed, cars lifted off ground)
F3	158-206	EF3	136-165	Severe damage (entire stories of house destroyed; trains overturned; heavy cars lifted and thrown)
F4	207-260	EF4	166-200	Extreme damage (well-constructed homes leveled)
F5	261-318	EF5	>200	Total destruction of buildings – some cars and trains can be thrown approximately 1 mile

You may not think of Allegany County as having the right type of climate and geography to allow for the formation of tornadoes, but the region does experience tornado events from time to time. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) maintains records on tornado activity, and here are some of the statistics for Allegany County through 2012:

Date	Location	Time	Magnitude	F-Wind Speed Range	EF-Wind Speed Range
07/05/1969	Mt. Savage Road	1:15 PM	F2	113-157	
06/02/1998	Mount Savage Junction	6:56 PM	F1	73-112	
06/02/1998	Cumberland	7:21 PM	F0	40-72	
06/02/1998	Frostburg	8:43 PM	F4	207-260	
07/29/2009	Oldtown	1:48 PM	EF0		65-85
07/29/2009	Belle Grove	2:29 PM	EF0		65-85
04/28/2011	Town Creek	12:27 AM	EF0		65-85
04/28/2011	Green Ridge	12:35 AM	EF0		65-85
06/01/2012	Piney Grove	5:31 PM	EF1		86-110

A tornado can occur at any time of year. Tornadoes usually occur between 3:00PM and 9:00PM but can happen at any time of day. The average tornado moves southwest to northeast but can move in any direction. If severe weather is expected, stay tuned to radio or television for important weather updates and safety information. Have a NOAA Weather Radio with a warning alarm and battery back-up so you can receive severe weather information if the power goes out.

A **Tornado Watch** means tornadoes are possible in your area; remain alert for approaching storms and monitor local weather reports. A **Tornado Warning** means a tornado has been sighted or is indicated by weather radar. If a **Tornado Warning** is issued, move to the lowest level of the building. If there is no basement, move to an interior room or hallway on the lowest floor, stay away from windows, and cover your head if possible. If you are in a car, do not try to outrun a tornado; leave the vehicle immediately and lie flat in a ditch or depression. Mobile homes offer little protection from tornadoes and should be abandoned. If you cannot reach an appropriate building in time, lie flat in a ditch or depression.

Tornado weather signs:

- Dark, often greenish sky
- Funnel cloud formation
- Debris field under the funnel cloud
- Large hail
- Loud roar similar to freight train.

For questions about this Allegany County Department of Emergency Services information, contact Susan M. Lee, Deputy Director, Administration, slee@alleganygov.org, T 301-876-9155, F 301-876-9160, 11400 PPG Road, SE, Cumberland, MD 21502-8718.