

# Safety Talk

JUNE 2023



## TORNADO PREPAREDNESS CHECKLIST

Tornadoes can occur with little or no warning. Taking precautions in advance of the storms, such as developing an emergency plan and learning the warning signs can help you stay safe if a tornado occurs in your area. Prepare now!

### What To Do Before a Storm:

- Find a safe room built to withstand high winds. The next best protection is a small room with no windows on the lowest level of a sturdy building.
- Mobile buildings, manufactured buildings, trailers or recreational vehicles (RV's) are not safe in high wind events.
- Plan ahead by finding a sturdy building to shelter in before a tornado watch or warning.

### Practice Tornado Drills:

- Practice moving to your safe locations.
- Create a personal support team of people you may assist and who can assist you.

### Plan to Stay Connected:

- Sign up for free emergency alerts from local news stations or phone apps.
- Plan to monitor local weather and news.
- Have a backup battery or a way to charge your cell phone.
- Have a battery-powered radio during a power outage.
- Know the difference between a Tornado Watch & a Tornado Warning.
- **Tornado Watch** - Be prepared! Tornadoes are possible in and near the watch area.
- **Tornado Warning** - Take Action! A tornado is near. There is danger. Move to a safe location right away.

### Learn Emergency Skills:

- Learn First Aid and CPR.
- Be ready to live without power.
- Have water and food in storage.
- Make a plan for back up power. Utilize generators, but do not run them indoors.

### Avoid Injury:

- Do not enter buildings after a tornado has hit your area.
- If your building has been damaged, exit with extreme caution.
- Do not use matches or lighters inside the building.
- If you smell gas, leave immediately.
- If you are trapped in the building, try to text for help, bang on a pipe or walls, or use a whistle instead of shouting.
- Stay clear of fallen power lines or broken utility lines.

## LANDSCAPE HAZARDS

As people visit your county's property, they will travel your sidewalks and be exposed to your landscape. The goal is to make these areas as smooth as possible, while also elevating aesthetics and maintaining a professional, neat appearance. However, letting landscape maintenance deteriorate or not keeping up with repairs and cleanup can result in escalated landscape accidents and increased liability expenses.

Below are common problems you might find on your property.

### Standing Water Spots

Seeing standing water spots on your property is never a good thing. This normally indicates a drainage problem. Standing water can cause slip/fall hazards on the walkways and cause hazards as pedestrians enter your buildings with wet shoes.

### Erosion Problems

You may have poor edge guarding or maybe hardscapes nearby that aren't built properly or a lack of plants that can assist in holding hillsides in place. The end result is mud and debris that may slide down hills into walkways creating more slip/fall hazards.

### Overgrown Plants, Trees & Shrubs

If you don't maintain them, they can grow wild during growing season and branches can reach out over walkways causing contact injuries or poor visibility. Poorly maintained trees can cause head trauma if dead or weak branches are not maintained. Overgrown trees and shrubs can also create heightened security risks at night by limiting views from security cameras or diminish lighting.

### Surface Dips, Cracks & Buckles

Uneven ground surfaces can cause major trip hazards for pedestrians and employees. Typically, these hazards are due to cracked concrete and asphalt. Also, tree roots can grow and elevate hardscape areas. It's important to repair cracking, buckling hardscapes before they become a bigger issue. In some cases you may need to remove trees. Larger issues may require a complete hardscape renovation or redirection of pedestrian traffic.

### Trash & Debris

If trash is neglected, debris and waste can pile up on your property. Trash can include everything from twig and leaf litter to actual garbage and broken glass. Not only is trash unsightly, but it could create slip/trip and fall hazards. Weekly trash patrol is essential to keeping your property clean and safe.

### Poor Lighting & Poor Visibility

Proper lighting and visibility help avoid property accidents. You want adequate and clear lighting on your signage, directional markers, walkways, parking areas, and entryways. Your signage should be free of overgrown trees and shrubs and be visible at any time of the day or night.

## BACKING ACCIDENT PREVENTION

Driving a County vehicle includes risk — from the possible cost of property damage & injury to the potential for lawsuits. Those risks multiply when you need to back up a vehicle. It's important for all employees to be trained in proper backing.

**Follow these tips to prevent vehicle backing accidents:**

### **Know your blind spots.**

The larger the vehicle, the larger the blind spot. Ask an employee to stand directly behind a parked vehicle with a safety cone. Have him or her walk back from the vehicle, set down the cone when it becomes visible to the driver, and measure the distance of the blind spot.

### **Walk around the vehicle.**

Walk around the entire vehicle, observing the proximity of structures, other cars, pedestrians, or overhanging wires. Map it out in your head before you get behind the wheel.

### **Avoid backups when possible.**

In a parking lot, pull through to the space ahead of you; don't leave room for someone to park in front of your vehicle. If possible, park in the street rather than a driveway.

### **Use a spotter for difficult situations.**

Communicate with hand signals that the driver and spotter understand.

### **Get proper rest.**

Fatigue and lack of rest are major contributors to fleet accidents. Make sure drivers are well rested and alert when driving.

### **Use technology with caution.**

Back-up alarms warn bystanders when a vehicle is in reverse. Back-up cameras warn a driver when an object is in the reverse path. Be sure your path is clear. However, these tools can fail if the driver or surrounding pedestrians ignore or fail to use these devices properly. You are responsible!



## NATIONAL SAFETY MONTH



# NATIONAL SAFETY MONTH

**June is National Safety Month**, and it's time to get serious about promoting safety in the home, workplace, and community. The observance was created by the National Safety Council (NSC) in 1996 to raise awareness about the importance of safety. This year's theme is **"Safety at Home"**.

Safety is made up of many different components such as training, PPE, maintained equipment, and probably the most important, a well-rested, healthy employee. And, that happens at home.

### ***Why National Safety Month Is Important***

1. **It focuses on all aspects of employee health and safety.** Instead of focusing on a single workplace hazard, the National Safety Council has chosen emergency preparedness, wellness, falls, and driving this year.
2. **It gives us insights into the history of industrial safety.** Looking into past events that have killed many workers is what drove labor laws and the creation of the first occupational safety legislation in 1970.
3. **It offers safety tips for everyday life.** National Safety Month teaches us to be proactive when it comes to anticipating potential disasters or injury. This is something that you can implement at work or at home to make life safer for you and your loved ones. Look at last month article about OODA. It works! Observe, Orient, Decide, Act.

## JUNE 2023 QUIZ

### TRUE or FALSE

1. Plan ahead for tornadoes. Find sturdy buildings to hide in before a tornado watch or warning.
2. To avoid slip/fall hazards, maintain your office building landscaping & hardscapes.
3. After a tornado, its ok to enter a building that had been damaged.
4. Safety at home is not a concern.
5. Safe backing of a county owned vehicle is not the driver's responsibility.

### Answers

1. True 2. True 3. True 4. False 5. True