Are You Prepared?

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Tuesday my phone started going off alerting me of a tornado warning. Soon the fire/tornado whistle started to sound. Then our tornado/storm alert system in our building sounded. It is March and the time when Kansas begins their storm season. This past week was tornado alert week. We all received the alerts, schools and businesses practiced going to the basement and reviewed what to do if a tornado was coming. All good and important but have you taken the next step? Are you and your home prepared?

Do you and your family know the difference between a tornado watch and tornado warning? A watch means conditions are favorable for the development of thunderstorms and tornados. A warning means that a tornado has either been spotted or the development of a tornado appears imminent.

Do you have your grab and go bag packed and a shelter location and supplies ready?

Grab and Go Bag (Ready by the front door or easily accessible spot)

- Identification
  - copies of your driver’s license, passports, social security cards
- Safe deposit box key
- Pocket notebook and pen or pencil
- Insurance cards, policies, or other proof of insurance coverage
- Cash, checks, credit/debit cards
- Phone/computer/external charger
- Copies of the safe deposit box contents (some keep this information on phone/computer, but what if there is not electricity for days?)
  - Household inventory
  - Immunization records
  - Bank account numbers
  - Copies (front and back) of ATM, debit, and credit cards
  - Phone numbers and account information for all financial service and insurance providers
  - Family records (birth, marriage, death certificates)
  - Will, contracts, deeds, stocks, and bonds
  - Titles to vehicles
  - Important telephone numbers (family members, doctors, veterinarians)
  - Names and prescription numbers for medications

Shelter Items (enough for each member of the family for 3 days)

- Bottled water
- Pet food
- First Aid kit & book
- Sleeping bags/warm blankets
- Change of clothing, sturdy shoes
- Chlorine bleach
- Fire extinguisher
- Matches in a waterproof container
• Personal hygiene items
• Canned food items
• Can Opener
• Duct Tape/plastic sheeting
• Garbage bags
• Moist towelettes
• Whistle to alert others in case you are trapped
• Pliers
• Biking helmet or something to protect your head

If you have these items already in a grab and go bag and in your shelter, go through everything and update papers, and any out-of-date food, medicine, or outgrown clothing.

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