

Remember...

- Monitor **NOAA Weather Radio** for the latest warnings, watches and advisories
- **NWS Spokane web page:** www.weather.gov/Spokane
- Reports found on **NWS Spokane Facebook & Twitter**

Reporting Procedures

Be pro-active in sending weather reports.

- **1-800-483-4532** (reports only)
- **(509) 244-0435** in Spokane area.
- www.weather.gov/Spokane/StormReport.php
- Twitter—send report **#wawx #idwx**
- Radio your contact point in **ARES/RACES**
- Call your Sheriff dispatch
- Lastly, email nws.spokane@noaa.gov

Spotter Training and Resources

- www.weather.gov/Spokane/spotter.php
- www.meted.ucar.edu/index.php

Remember....

- **Watch**—favorable for severe or hazardous weather — but in the near future.
- **Warning**—severe weather is imminent or occurring — causing a risk to life or property
- **Advisory**—hazardous weather is imminent or occurring— but not life threatening



Inland Northwest Weather Spotter Checklist



Tornado or Funnel Cloud: ANY

Strong Winds: +30 mph/Damage (58mph severe)

Hail: +1/2" in diameter (1" severe)

Heavy Rain: +1/2" in 1 hr or +1" in 12 hrs

Flooding: ANY

Mixed Precipitation: freezing rain or sleet

Snow: +2" in valleys/+6" in mountains

Poor Visibility: 1/2 mile or less

Travel Problems: due to weather

Damage, Injury or Loss of life: ANY

Excessive Heat: ANY

Excessive Cold: ANY

NWS Spokane: 1-800-483-4532

Safety Tips for Spotters

Do not take risks to observe severe weather!

Tornadoes and Thunderstorms

- The first sign of a tornado may not be a funnel at the cloud base. Your first clue may be debris or dust at the surface, so be alert to events at ground level, as well as in the clouds. Although a loud roar is frequently associated with a tornado, strong straight-line winds can also produce such a sound.
- It is helpful to use binoculars to look for rotation and other cloud features. Once you spot a funnel or tornado, be alert for the formation of others in the area. Watch out for flying debris.
- If you find yourself in large hail, report it immediately. Large hail will often fall in advance of a tornado. Hail is an excellent reflector of the color green. The sky may turn a shade of green before hail falls.
- The best view of a thunderstorm is from its right flank or rear of the storm. For example, if a storm is tracking to the northeast; the best view is from the south.
- Have a safe place nearby for protection from hazardous weather. Cars are safe places for lightning but not for tornadoes. NEVER try to outrun or drive away from an approaching tornado. Rather, seek shelter in a basement if possible. If caught outdoors, lie down in a ditch or culvert.
- Blowing dust or heavy rain may accompany downbursts or strong winds. Be prepared for sudden changes in visibility.
- Lightning tends to strike the tallest object in an area...make sure it's not you! Find safe shelter indoors or in a vehicle. Stay out of water.
- Utility lines and metal pipes can conduct electricity and are susceptible to lightning strikes. Unplug unessential appliances and avoid using land-line phones during thunderstorms.
- Avoid being near windows during hail or wind storms.

Remember... Stay indoors for 30 minutes after the last clap of thunder.

Safety Tips for Spotters

Your safety is the most important!

Winter Weather

- Avoid overexertion, such as shoveling heavy snow, pushing a car or walking in deep snow over a long period of time. The strain from the cold and the hard labor may cause a heart attack. Sweating could lead to a chill and hypothermia.
- Carry a Storm Survival kit in your car. It should contain blankets, flashlights, first-aid kit, non-perishable food, knife, extra clothes, sand, shovel, windshield scraper, brush, tool kit, tow rope, booster cables, and water.
- Remember to winterize your vehicle before the winter season begins. Keep your gas tank near full to avoid ice in the tank and fuel lines. Carry chains if traveling in the mountains.
- Dress for the weather. You should wear layers of loose-fitting, light weight, warm clothing. Wear a hat. Try to stay dry.
- If caught in a winter storm, stay indoors or find a safe shelter. Stay warm and dry. Avoid eating snow; instead melt snow for drinking water.

Flooding

- Be alert for rising water, especially in canyons and low lying areas. Nearly half of all flash flood fatalities are auto related.
- Avoid walking, driving, or swimming through flood waters. A depth of two feet of water moving at 6 mph will carry away most automobiles. Be extra careful at night!

Family Disaster Plan

- Gather information about hazards in your area.
- Create the plan—decide where to meet, choose an out-of-state “contact”.
- Implement the plan—have a family disaster kit, post emergency phone numbers, check smoke detectors & fire extinguishers, learn CPR, know when to call 911.
- Practice and Maintain the plan!