

## **Tornado Awareness Being Prepared!**

Creighton University participates in annual tornado drill each spring. On that March 16,2011 the University will focus its attention on campus tornado safety procedures and will test **CUAlert**, the University's emergency notification system. This event coincides with Douglas County's annual day to test sirens and to raise the community's awareness for tornado preparedness.

### **What's Happening on March 16?**

- The National Weather Service will issue a simulated **TORNADO WATCH** at approximately 9:50 a.m. A **watch** is in effect when the National Weather Service reports that conditions are such that a tornado could develop.
- The National Weather Service will then issue a simulated **TORNADO WARNING** at approximately 10:10 a.m. A **warning** is in effect when a tornado has been sighted or detected by radar.
- When the simulated **tornado warning** test has been issued, Douglas County's Emergency Management Agency will activate civil defense sirens to test their operability.
- It is important to note that warning sirens are only intended to be heard outdoors, not inside a building. Consequently, it is important to have someone in each department or area monitoring the radio, television, or weather alert radio when severe weather is pending.
- Creighton University will conduct a tornado drill coinciding with the activation of the county's civil defense sirens. Public Safety will issue a **CUAlert** and students, faculty and staff are expected to take shelter in designated areas. *(Note: The **CUAlert** system is automated and will be issued at 10 :10 a.m. even if the sirens are delayed)*

### **Your Role During the Drill**

- Participating in the drill will help you know what to do in the event of a real tornado warning. Our goal is to have everyone respond to the drill and assemble at designated shelter areas by 10:20 a.m.

### **Faculty:**

- Review what to do in the event of a tornado warning using the information presented here.
- Sign up for **CUAlert** and encourage your students to do so as well.
- If you are teaching at that time the warning is issued, explain to students what is happening and lead them to the appropriate shelter areas.

### **Staff**

- Familiarize yourself on what to do if a tornado happens using the information presented here.

- Sign up for **CUAlert** and encourage others to do so as well.
- If you work in an area where students reside or are gathered, lead them to the shelter area.
- If you are in your offices or at other locations on campus, let your colleagues and visitors know about the drill and seek shelter.

### **Students**

- Follow faculty and staff guidance or proceed to the closest designated shelter.
- Sign up for **CUAlert** and encourage others to do so as well. Assist individuals who may need help in reaching shelter areas. Once you have reached a shelter area, you have completed the drill and may resume campus activities.

### **Campus Emergency Procedures for Tornadoes**

- Tornadoes can happen any time, day or night, and it is important to know what your role and responsibilities are in this situation.
- When a **tornado watch** is issued, Public Safety will initiate a calling tree so the schools/colleges, departments and support areas are aware that weather conditions are such that a tornado could develop. Indoors, radios and televisions should be monitored for further developments. Outdoors, people should be alert for emergency sirens.
- When a **tornado warning** is issued, civil defense sirens will sound. Classes and other activity will be interrupted and everyone will be expected to seek shelter in the nearest designated shelter area until an all-clear has been issued on the radio or television.
- **NOTE:** Public Safety will send out a **CUAlert** when **TORNADO WARNINGS are issued**, but this process is neither instantaneous nor foolproof. Rely primarily on the civil defense sirens, radio, and television for timely and accurate information.

### **During a Tornado Warning**

- Interrupt class, meetings or other activities.
- Direct students, staff and visitors to the nearest designated shelter area. The following link provides a list of shelter areas by building  
<http://www2.creighton.edu/adminfinance/publicsafety/stormshelters/index.php>.
- **IN GENERAL, GO TO THE LOWEST LEVEL OF A BUILDING, TO A SMALL INTERIOR ROOM WITHOUT WINDOWS.**
- Remain in the shelter area until an all-clear has been issued on the radio or television.
- If you are outdoors, go indoors to the lowest level of a building.

- If you are outdoors and unable to seek shelter, lie flat in a ditch or low spot and cover your head with your hands.

### **Important Preparations for a Tornado Emergency**

- Sign up for **CUAlert** at <http://www.creighton.edu/CUAlert>. (Be sure you are receiving notifications via text messaging, voice and e-mail.)
- Know the designated shelter areas for the buildings you frequent. Visit <http://www2.creighton.edu/adminfinance/publicsafety/stormshelters/index.php> for a list of tornado shelters.
- Have a portable radio and flashlight on hand (storms are often accompanied by power outages).
- Familiarize yourself with the University's Emergency Preparedness website at <http://www2.creighton.edu/emergencypreparedness/>.

### **Tornado Facts\***

- Some students are not from the Midwest and may not be familiar with tornadoes. Here are some interesting facts.
- In an average year, 1,200 tornadoes cause 70 fatalities, and 1,500 injuries nationwide.
- Tornadoes may appear nearly transparent until they pick up dust and debris.
- Most move from the southwest to the northeast, but they can move in any direction.
- The average forward speed is 30 m.p.h. but they can reach 70 m.p.h.
- They can be one-mile wide and stay on the ground for 50 miles.
- They can happen at any time of the day or night but are most likely to occur between 3 p.m. and 9 p.m.

\*American Red Cross statistics . . . additional statistical information is available at [www.spc.noaa.gov](http://www.spc.noaa.gov).