

Severe Weather



In 2010, Cyclone Xynthia moved across Germany and Europe with devastating effect. Very high wind speeds and falling trees paralysed motorways and airports. Hurricanes, tornadoes, whirlwinds, violent thunderstorms, snow chaos or heavy rain are part of the course of the year at our latitude. As a result of climate change, the occurrence of severe weather has become more frequent. The damage is immense year after year. And not only from “storms of the century”. Anyone can be affected.

The destruction that can be caused by a tornado in a large city. Photomontage





Residential area destroyed by a tornado
in Quirla, Thuringia, 2006



© Camera4/Jim/imagoe

- Loose branches, toppling trees, falling roof tiles and window boxes – in severe weather, you should not stay outside. Avoid danger zones such as forests. The risk to life and limb is too high.

Well-prepared

Have candles, torches and, if applicable, a VHF radio with batteries ready.

- › Prepare an emergency pack containing important documents, in case you have to leave your home.
- › In the event of damage or loss, it is helpful if you have documented your property in the form of photos.
- › Pay attention to the severe weather warnings in the media. You can see severe weather forecasts by the German Meteorological Service at any time online at **www.dwd.de**.



Correct behaviour during severe weather

OUTSIDE

- › Avoid unprotected places where you could be hit by hail or by objects carried along by the storm.
- › Seek shelter in a building, avoiding halls with large ceiling span widths in the event of severe storms.
- › If there is enough time, secure the outdoor movable objects, such as garden furniture, bicycles etc.
- › In the event of hail, lie down – if there is no shelter anywhere – with your face to the ground and protect your head and neck with your hands!

THUNDERSTORM

- › In the event of a thunderstorm, seek shelter in a building, or crouch on the balls of your feet, in a hollow if possible.
- › Avoid open country, mountain peaks, trees, towers, masts and antennae, and do not lean on fences.
- › Keep a minimum distance of 50 metres from power lines.
- › Avoid all objects with metal parts, such as umbrellas and bicycles.

Storm damage caused by Hurricane Kyrill in 2007



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Lightning strike in a big city

- › In your car, you are safe from thunderstorms. Therefore, stay in the vehicle and do not touch any naked metal parts.

IN THE CAR

- › In the event of hail and whirlwinds, close the windows, roller or folding shutters and keep away from unprotected openings.
- › Seek out a low room, e.g. a cellar, or an internal room. Cars, caravans and lightweight buildings are not necessarily safe during a storm.
- › Avoid rooms with a large ceiling span width, e.g. halls.
- › Disconnect sensitive devices or use overvoltage protection. Corresponding devices are available on the market.

AT HOME

- › Pets or livestock are frightened by severe weather. Try to calm your animals down and ensure that they are not able to leave the protected area.

PROTECTION FOR ANIMALS



Snow drifts

Behaviour after the severe weather

- › Before tidying up, you should check and document precisely what has been damaged or destroyed, e.g. by the ingress of water or the breakage of glass.
- › If someone is injured, perform first aid and call the rescue service on 112, if necessary. Further information in the section “Emergency call”.
- › Attention! If fuel oil or other hazardous substances have been released as a result of flooding, e.g. in the cellar, call the fire brigade on 112.