



# Family & Graduate Student Housing

All FGSH residents are advised to read and understand the following information concerning weather situations and natural disasters.

**It is the responsibility of each resident to be aware of the possibility of severe weather.**

OSU staff is not responsible for alerting guests/residents to the presence of severe weather and/or siren warnings. They must also seek shelter. It is the responsibility of the guests/residents to monitor the weather situation and take appropriate precautions.

### Severe Weather Conditions

It is important that residents understand the difference between a 'watch' and a 'warning', as these two terms are frequently used by meteorologists and news media.

In general, a 'watch' means that conditions are favorable for a specific type of severe weather (thunderstorms, tornados, ice, snow, etc) to occur. A 'warning' means that severe weather is actually occurring or is imminent in the warning area. Following is a guide for what residents should do in case of severe weather:

#### Thunderstorm Watch

- Means that conditions are favorable for severe thunderstorms to develop.
- In cases of a 'thunderstorm watch', residents should review emergency procedures and be prepared should severe weather strike.

#### Thunderstorm Warning

- Means that a thunderstorm has actually been observed by spotters or indicated on radar and is occurring or imminent in the warning area.
- Hail, high winds, heavy rains, and/or lightning may be present.
- Residents should take precautions to protect themselves without delay.

#### Tornado Watch

- Means that conditions are favorable for tornadoes to develop.
- In cases of a 'tornado watch', residents should review emergency procedures and be prepared should severe weather strike.

#### Tornado Warning

- Means that a tornado has actually been observed by spotters or indicated on radar and is occurring or imminent in the warning area.
- Residents should take precautions to protect themselves without delay.

## Thunderstorm Procedures

### Everyday Procedures and Precautions

It is extremely important that FGSH residents understand the nature of Oklahoma weather and what to do when severe weather strikes. In particular, it is important that residents understand it is standard procedure that, during tornado warnings, every person should go to the lowest level of a building. In the event of a tornado, residents are responsible for finding shelter. Residents in downstairs apartments should let upstairs neighbors into their apartment to seek shelter. Similarly, upstairs residents should go to the lowest level (i.e., first floor) of their building to take shelter. THIS IS A PUBLIC SAFETY ISSUE. It can literally mean life or death in some situations. **Downstairs residents should understand the importance of letting their neighbors into their home in cases of tornado warnings—this is an excellent reason for all residents to get to know their neighbors!**

### Pre-Storm Precautions

Residents should tune radios to local radio stations (such as KSPI - AM 780 or KSPI - FM 93.7 or KVRO - FM 105.5, or KOSU - FM 91.7) and keep a flashlight handy. Live information will be broadcast at intervals on these stations. Another good source of current weather information including radar images and updated watches/warnings can be obtained from the local/OKC television stations. Local radio, television channels, and websites are much better to watch during severe weather than national ones (i.e., The Weather Channel / <http://www.weather.com>), as local stations will have watches, warnings, and radar images released immediately. Local TV stations and websites include:

- KWTW 9 (Oklahoma City News Station Channel 9; website: <http://www.newsok.com>)
- KOCO 5 (Oklahoma City News Station Channel 5; website: <http://www.koco.com>)
- KFOR 4 (Oklahoma City News Station Channel 4; website: <http://www.kfor.com>)

### Tornado Warning Precautions

While tornados can occur throughout the year, tornado season in Oklahoma is generally from March through June. When a tornado warning is issued on television or sounded on the campus tornado sirens, residents/guests should do the following:

- Upstairs residents/guests should go to a shelter or to an apartment on the lowest floor of their building. Downstairs residents should go to a shelter or remain in their apartment. All residents/guests should watch the weather and **go to a shelter prior to the storm's arrival—it is too risky to try to go to another building once the sirens have sounded!**

- The following campus buildings have basements: Architecture, ATRC, Bennett Hall, Business, Classroom, Cordell, Engineering North & South, Gallagher-Iba Arena, Human Environmental Science, Iba Hall, Edmon Low Library, Life Science East & West, Math Science, McElroy Hall, North Murray, OADDL, Parker Hall, Physical Sciences, Scott Hall, Seretean Performing Arts Center, Small Grains, Stout Hall, Student Health, Student Union, USDA, Vet Med Teaching Hospital, Wellness Center, Wentz Hall, and Willard. Please note that some of these basements are quite small.
- In case of storm activity, the OSU Police open some on campus buildings for use as a storm shelter by the general public. These buildings are open to anyone in the community who needs shelter, and they fill up very quickly. Please check <http://safety.okstate.edu/severe-weather> for the list of current public storm shelters.
- If a resident is taking shelter in a downstairs apartment, residents should immediately go to the center-most location in the apartment, avoiding southwest walls, glass, and any rooms with windows. Residents should put as many walls as possible between themselves and the outside as possible, and avoid large, open rooms.
- If possible, residents should protect themselves with sturdy furniture or a mattress to protect against falling debris and flying objects. The resident should crouch as low as possible on the floor and face the wall with his/her hands over the back of his/her head and neck, tucked into a ball (as depicted in the pictures below). When possible, it is recommended to cover up under a heavy blanket or mattress.



Tuck into a ball, as depicted in this picture



A person crouched under a table for protection



A person crouched in a bathtub for protection



A person crouched in a closet for protection



A person crouched under a table AND covered with a blanket for protection



A person crouched in a bathtub AND covered with a blanket for protection

- If a resident is outside, he/she should seek shelter in the closest building. If the resident cannot enter a building, he/she should seek shelter in a ditch or otherwise depressed surface. Stay away from anything that could fall (i.e. trees, power lines, etc). If in a car or truck during a tornado, remain inside the vehicle.
- If local radio is available, keep tuned to KSPI-FM (93.7) or KOSU-FM (91.7) for further details; the 'all clear' will be announced over the radio.
- Remain calm at all times.

### Post-Storm Precautions

After a destructive storm has passed, FGSH staff will be present to ensure all residents are accounted for. Residents should be aware of possible dangerous and unstable conditions following the storm, such as broken glass and exposed power lines. Residents should notify the nearest FGSH staff member of their whereabouts so that rosters can be updated. If any resident/guest has sustained injuries, he/she should call 911 and seek immediate medical attention. If an apartment/facility sustains damage during the storm, the resident should notify the Action Desk (405-744-7154) or their neighborhood AA.

### Stillwater Emergency Management Signals (Outdoor-Sirens)

The City of Stillwater has installed outdoor tornado warning sirens throughout the city, including in FGSH. These sirens will be activated any time of day or night when needed.

Following is a description of the sirens/tones:

--The tornado siren emits a steady three-minute tone.

--The flood signal is a quick high-low siren sound (like a British siren).

--The Man-Made Disaster (i.e., terrorism) sounds a tone that alternates between high and low tones.

\*\* Note that an all-clear signal is no longer used because the danger of another storm approaching might be interpreted as all clear. A second siren indicates a second or repeated warning.

If a siren sounds, do not call the OSU Police Department for information. All FGSH residents should take precautions immediately to keep themselves safe.

The City of Stillwater tests the sirens on the first Tuesday of each month at 11:30 a.m. If the sirens sound at any other time, there is the possibility of a weather-related or other emergency that could require residents to take precautions. For weather-related emergencies, the City of Stillwater will activate the sirens during a tornado warning if a tornado is imminent.

If the siren is sounding, it is too late to begin seeking shelter. Thus, if the siren is sounding, residents should not get into a car or leave their apartment to go to a shelter. Instead, residents should take immediate precautions to protect themselves, their families, and/or their upstairs neighbors.

### Hail Storm Procedures

Hail is a showery precipitation in the form of irregular pellets or balls of ice. Hail storms can be dangerous due to the speed and weight of the hail. Hail sometimes occurs as part of a thunderstorm.

During a hail storm, residents should avoid sitting or standing near windows. Residents should not venture out into a hailstorm. If a resident finds him/herself outside during a hailstorm, he/she should use a book or other hard surface to shield his/her head from falling hail. Residents should not drive into or during a hailstorm.

If any resident/guest has sustained injuries, he/she should call 911 and seek immediate medical attention. If an apartment/facility sustains damage during the storm, the resident should notify the Action Desk (405-744-7154) or their neighborhood AA. Residents should NOT attempt to remove broken glass from a damaged window. Instead, residents should provide the Action Desk or neighborhood AA with the apartment number of the apartment in which the broken window occurred. Residents should continue to monitor the weather for other conditions to take into consideration.

## Winter Storm Procedures

Oklahoma occasionally receives both snow and ice storms. Roads may be closed, classes may be cancelled, and pedestrian hazards may exist.

Be aware of the weather. If winter weather is predicted or the weather appears to be turning bad, residents should check local weather stations.

If the primary concern is for snow:

Residents should monitor the weather. Snow can still create dangerous driving conditions due to white-outs (heavy, windblown snow that impairs visibility), slick roads, and make it difficult to differentiate between traffic lanes, where medians are located, etc.

If the primary concern is for ice:

It is not unusual to receive ice accumulations greater than a quarter-inch, which makes travel extremely dangerous. Residents should make sure they understand the dangers, including icicles on buildings, severe loss of traction, and falling tree limbs and power lines. Residents should avoid venturing outside, both during and after the storm, and refrain from travel if it is icy.

If a resident experiences a loss of heat in his/her apartment, he/she should contact the Action Desk at 405-744-7154 or contact their neighborhood AA.

Residents should monitor <http://www.okstate.edu> for information about possible closing of OSU. The President of OSU, in consultation with the divisional vice presidents, makes the decision to close campus in the event of a severe winter storm. Closings are rare. Regardless of the closing, Residential Life services are essential to the operation of OSU and FGSH staff will continue to serve residents and maintain normal operations in the apartments.

## Earthquake Procedures

While earthquakes are infrequent in Oklahoma, a fault line is located within the state. Though the quakes are typically low intensity ones, there is still the potential for structural damage.

Residents should immediately protect themselves by doing any of the following:

- Take shelter under heavy, sturdy furniture (i.e. a desk or table), hold on to it, and move with the movements of the quake.
- Brace yourself in a doorway, but avoid being struck by swinging doors.
- Move against an interior wall, kneel or sit, and cover yourself with a blanket or similar object.
- If outside, residents should outside, move into an open area, and stay away from anything that could fall (i.e. buildings, trees, power lines).

Residents should be aware of possible dangerous and unstable conditions following an earthquake, such as broken glass and exposed power lines. If a resident is instructed to evacuate an apartment or building by FGSH Staff or University personnel, he/she should do so immediately. If any resident/guest has sustained injuries, he/she should call 911 and seek

immediate medical attention. If an apartment/facility sustains damage during the storm, the resident should notify the Action Desk (405-744-7154) or their neighborhood AA.

### Flash Flooding Procedures

Flash flooding is defined as a rapid submergence of land under water caused by substantial amount of rain in a relatively short period of time. Flash flooding can occur even after relatively moderate amounts of rainfall. The floods can make travel dangerous.

Residents should always be aware of the weather. If severe weather is predicted or the weather appears to be turning bad, residents should check local weather stations. Even if Stillwater is not under a Flood Warning, residents should not assume that the roads are safe. Some Stillwater streets close to campus are prone to flooding even after moderate amounts of rainfall. Thus, residents are strongly discouraged from venturing outside, especially in automobiles, during periods of heavy rain. If a resident is driving during heavy rain, he/she should always use good judgment. If an area looks like it is covered with water, it probably is (and is also probably deeper than expected). Drivers should always stay clear of flooded roadways, streets, and highways.

If a resident notices water inside an apartment, he/she should immediately notify the Action Desk (405-744-7154) or an AA.

Residents should be aware of debris that may have been left behind by the water. If any resident/guest has sustained injuries, he/she should call 911 and seek immediate medical attention. If an apartment/facility sustains damage during a storm/flood, the resident should notify the Action Desk (405-744-7154) or their neighborhood AA.