The Eye of the Storm

While tornadoes occur in many parts of the world, they are most frequently found in the United States, occasionally including New York City. Typically a tornado is spawned by powerful thunderstorms, but it can also accompany a tropical storm or hurricane as the storm moves onto land. Most tornado-related damages result from high wind speeds, wind-blown debris, and large hail. Tornadoes are not limited to one season; they can occur at any time of year.

Know Your Weather Words!

- **Tornado**: A rotating column of air extending from the ground to the base of a thunderstorm that is intense enough at the surface to cause damage. Wind speeds vary from 40 mph to 318 mph.
- **Tornado Watch**: Issued when conditions are favorable for the development of tornadoes in and close to the watch area. A tornado watch can be in effect for several hours.
- **Tornado Warning**: Issued when a tornado is indicated by radar or sighted by storm spotters.
- **Fujita Scale**: Used to measure a tornado's strength. The weakest tornado is an EF0, and the strongest is an EF5.

What to Do If a Tornado Is Likely

- If you are indoors, go to your basement or the lowest point in your residence. Move to a small interior room or hallway and get under a sturdy piece of furniture. Stay away from windows.
- If you are in a car, do not try to outrun a tornado. Get out of your car and seek shelter.
- If you are outdoors, head for shelter. If you can't find shelter, take cover in a ditch or similar area. Cover your head with your hands. Do not take cover under an overpass or bridge.
- Avoid buildings with wide roofs, such as auditoriums, cafeterias, large hallways, or shopping malls.

Let's get ready and stay safe if tornadoes occur in our area!