



Steps to Tornado Recovery

Returning Home

When faced with the destruction of your home following a tornado, you may wonder where to start putting the pieces back together. With so much to do, it's hard to decide what to do first. Below are tips for taking the first steps.

- Take care of yourself and your family first. Make sure your tetanus shot is up-to-date. Get plenty of fluids, eat right, and try to get enough sleep. Talk to your friends and family—it's the best stress reliever.
- Reenter your property safely. Wear clothing appropriate to the task:
 - ✓ Closed-toe shoes
 - ✓ Long pants
 - ✓ Leather or work gloves
 - ✓ Protective eyewear
 - ✓ Dust masks/filters to reduce the amount of insulation fibers you might breathe and to protect yourself if you are sensitive to dust or mold.
- Make sure utilities are turned off or disconnected. Do not enter the area if you smell gas or see downed power lines.
- Make a record of damage and losses—take pictures or make video recordings.
- Prevent further damage as much as possible and secure items from theft. If your roof has been exposed and the house is still standing, cover the roof to prevent water damage that may occur later.
- Contact your insurance agent or company representative.
- Assemble cleaning supplies and equipment.

Cleaning supplies

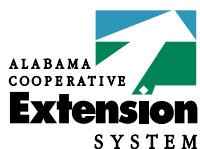
- ✓ Low-suds detergents
- ✓ Bleaches
- ✓ Disinfectants
- ✓ Ammonia
- ✓ Scouring powder
- ✓ Rubber gloves

Equipment

- ✓ Buckets
- ✓ Tools (crowbar, hammer, screw-driver)
- ✓ Brooms
- ✓ Shovels
- ✓ Hoes
- ✓ Scoops
- ✓ Sponge mop or mop that is easily squeezed out
- ✓ Wheelbarrow
- ✓ Dolly
- ✓ Bushel baskets
- ✓ Throw-away containers for garbage and containers to carry from house to street
- ✓ Water hose

- Salvage valuable items first, including the following:
 - ✓ Personal identification: birth certificates, driver's licenses, social security cards, marriage licenses, birth and death certificates
 - ✓ Insurance information (life, home, car)
 - ✓ Medical/medication information, including eyeglasses, hearing aids, or other items
 - ✓ Financial records, such as mortgage papers, property deeds, legal contracts, wills, bank account and credit card information, and utility bills
 - ✓ Valuables, such as jewelry, cash, and photos
- Discard items that cannot be salvaged.
- Use caution when handling clothing, linens, and other textiles contaminated with fiberglass fibers.
 - ✓ Wash items in a bathtub so the fibers go down the drain. Wear rubber gloves to keep the fibers from getting into your fingers.
 - ✓ Or put washable items in a washing machine. Rinse the drum thoroughly to remove fibers.
 - ✓ Dry-clean items that would be damaged by water. Alert the dry cleaner that fiberglass is present.
 - ✓ Vacuum items to help remove fiberglass fibers.
- Keep detailed records of extra expenses and business activity during the recovery.

Find more information about recovering your home and contents at www.aces.edu/eden.



For more information, call your county Extension office. Look in your telephone directory under your county's name to find the number.

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