

Natural Disasters

Toolbox Talk #12



Why Prep for Natural Disasters?

Living and working in Michigan, natural disasters usually aren't a huge concern for us. The chances of encountering one are very slim, but if we do find ourselves in the midst of a disaster, we need to be prepared. Imagine if a tornado was on track to hit your shop and no one knew where the tornado shelter was located, it would be chaos at a time where keeping calm could mean the difference between life and death. Times like that are why it is important to be prepared for the worst even if there is a low possibility for disaster.

Most Common Natural Disasters in Michigan

Thunderstorms and Lightning

- Avoid using power tools that are plugged into the wall
- Avoid working on large light poles, or doing work near large isolated trees
- Try to use only battery powered equipment
- Stay Indoors

Floods

- Have an evacuation plan for the area you are working in
- What conditions are necessary to cause an evacuation?
- Determine a chain of command
- Specific evacuation procedures and routes
- Discuss and practice evacuation plan with all employees

Tornadoes

- Have a prepared roster to take attendance of who is currently in the building
- Frequently check the tornado warning status while on the job to ensure you stay up to date.
- Determine a safe spot where everyone should go when a tornado hits
- Assign specific duties to workers in advance

When a Tornado Occurs

- Take cover in the safe spot, which should be an underground area, if none are available go to the lowest level of the building
- Avoid large rooms such as cafeterias, gymnasiums and auditoriums
- Follow the procedures developed by your shop leader and safety committee

