



TITLE: CODE GRAY – TORNADO PROCEDURE

PURPOSE: To establish a protocol for rapid emergency response in the event of a tornado.

SCOPE: All Hospital Employees, Medical Staff, and Volunteers

POLICY:

ACTIVATION:

- A. In the event of a tornado watch for the Knoxville area, the Disaster Coordinator or designee or Nursing Coordinator will evaluate the situation and notify Administration as appropriate.
- B. In the event of a tornado warning in Knox County, any of the following two individuals receiving the information (Security, Emergency Department, Nursing Coordinator or VP) will confer and notify the PBX Operator to implement a Code Gray.
- C. In the event of a tornado sighting in the immediate area, the employee receiving the information will ask the operator to page "Code Gray."

RELEVANT FACTORS:

DEFINITIONS:

Tornado: A violently rotating column of air extending from a thunderstorm to the ground.

Tornado Watch: An alert issued by the National Weather Service that weather conditions are favorable for the potential development of a tornado at a specified area during a specific time period.

Tornado Warning: An alert issued by the National Weather Service that a tornado has been sighted in the area.

PROCEDURE:

- A. The PBX Operator will page as follows:
"Attention hospital personnel":
"Code Gray"
"Code Gray"
"Code Gray"
- B. The PBX Operator will notify the on-call Administrator of activation.



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- C. Remain calm.
- D. Speed is essential when a tornado is sighted; you may only have a few minutes in which to act.
- E. Move all patients, visitors and staff to hallways, treatment or storage rooms, avoiding areas with windows. Ambulatory patients should have shoes on if at all possible.
- F. If needed, secure portable oxygen tanks and other equipment for transport. Switch to battery operated mode for equipment as indicated. Respiratory Care will deliver additional portable oxygen tanks to the units.
- G. Persons unable to be relocated should be moved as far as possible from windows and covered with blankets or other protective covering to provide a shield from flying debris.
- H. Shut off explosive gases in the kitchen and laundry (Engineering).
- I. Recovery
The Administrative person in charge will determine when to have the PBX Operator page "Code Gray--All Clear" and release staff to return to their regular work area.

PRECAUTIONS: N/A

SUPPORTIVE DATA:

- A. Preparedness:
 - 1. Staff is oriented to Code Gray procedures during orientation.
 - 2. Code Gray exercises are scheduled periodically by Emergency Preparedness Committee.
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Policy Owner: Safety Officer

References:

Related Policies: [Emergency Operations Plan, O911](#)

Origination Date: 12/93

Revision Dates: 4/10, 2/12

Last Review Date: 4/06, 2/12

Next Review Date: 2/15

Date Retired:

Approved: EOC Committee
Emergency Preparedness Committee