

WEATHERBANK, INC.

Weather for your Business. Weather for your Life.



Mary S.

*WxBank
Girl Friday
(and Monday,
Tuesday....)*

E-MAIL

Tornado Facts (You decide if they are "fun" facts!)

Thursday, August 27, 2009

Often, when talking to a customer on the phone, I am asked where our offices are located. For those of you who don't already know, the WeatherBank offices are in Edmond, Oklahoma, just north of Oklahoma City and in the center of the state.

Usually, the second question is about living in a tornado zone. Yes, there are plenty of tornadoes in Oklahoma, and while I don't EVER take one lightly, I have learned to live with them. It's like those who live with hurricanes or earthquakes; you never underestimate the power of these environmental threats, but having an understanding of exactly what they are and what to do when faced with one makes it easier to co-exist with them.

So, in an effort to empower you with information, I offer the following fun and scientific facts about tornadoes:

1. The tornado is the most violent of all earth's storms.
2. The average life span of a tornado is less than 15 minutes.
3. The fastest winds on earth are inside a tornado funnel. Winds inside the twister have been recorded at 300+mph.
4. The Enhanced Fujita Tornado scale measures wind speeds of tornadoes from EF0 to EF5. The wind speed of an EF5 tornado is over 200mph.
5. While tornadoes can happen all over the world, most happen in the United States.
6. Texas gets about 110 tornadoes each year, which is the most of any other state.
7. The largest tornado in the U.S. was around 2.5 miles wide! It happened in Nebraska in 2004.
8. The most violent tornado in recorded history happened on March 18, 1925. It killed 689 people, injured another 1,980 people, completely destroyed 4 towns, caused extensive damage to 6 more towns, and left 11,000 people homeless. Its path led it through parts of Missouri, Indiana, and Illinois.
9. While tornadoes are violent and leave destruction in their paths, they are also known to move people and things great distances without harm. In February, 2008, a tornado destroyed the home of Kerri Stowell and her son, 11 month old Kyson. Kerri had hidden in the bathtub with the baby, but the storm ripped through the house, taking the baby from her arms. Kerri died and was found near the local post office. Little Kyson was found dirty, but completely unharmed, just 300 feet from where the house had been.
10. Other stories about the weird things a tornado can do include embedding straw into the bark of a tree without bending it, and setting an entire hen house 16 feet up in a tree, while it all remains in tact and the chickens remain on their nests with unbroken eggs underneath them!

While very dangerous, tornadoes are a part of our lives here in Oklahoma, and they are very interesting. Like any other type of storm though, a keen awareness of safety precautions is absolutely necessary. Be proactive and learn what to do to protect yourselves from the weather threats that happen where you live. And BE SAFE OUT THERE!

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