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**Wisconsin Tornado and Severe Weather Awareness Week is April 4-8**  
*Statewide Tornado Drill April 7*

***For Immediate Release***

April 1, 2022

MADISON, Wis. – Governor Tony Evers is proclaiming April 4-8 as Tornado and Severe Weather Awareness Week in Wisconsin. ReadyWisconsin is encouraging every Wisconsinite to prepare for severe weather and tornadoes that occur during the spring and summer months.

“Severe weather can include several hazardous conditions produced by thunderstorms, such as damaging wind, tornadoes, hail, and flooding,” said Greg Engle, acting Wisconsin Emergency Management administrator. “Now is the time to be prepared, be aware, and be ready before a disaster occurs.”

Wisconsin averages 23 tornadoes per year. The National Weather Service confirmed 41 tornadoes touched down in Wisconsin in 2021. While the busiest time of year for tornadoes is typically during the spring and summer months, they can happen at anytime of year. In December of last year, Wisconsin had 10 tornado touchdowns reported in a single day.

To stay safe from severe weather, ReadyWisconsin encourages people to do the following:

- Create an emergency plan and practice it.
- Know where designated shelters are located at home, work, and school, and be ready to go there when a tornado warning is issued.
- Have multiple ways to receive alerts about approaching severe weather. Outdoor warning sirens, a NOAA Weather Radio, local media, and smart phone apps are all important tools. Don't rely on any single source for important life-saving information.
- If you have a mobile device, make sure it is enabled to receive Wireless Emergency Alerts. On many devices, that option is available in the settings menu.
- Keep up to date on the daily forecast for your area.
- Create an emergency kit for your home. Find tips for building a kit at <https://readywisconsin.wi.gov>

On April 7, Wisconsin will conduct its annual statewide tornado drill. At 1:45 p.m. and 6:45 p.m., everyone is encouraged to pause what they are doing and practice going to their designated shelter location. If there is severe weather expected anywhere in the state on April 7, the drill would be postponed to April 8. If you are unable to participate at those times, ReadyWisconsin encourages everyone to make time on the date of the drill to practice your plan.

During the drill times, the National Weather Service will conduct NOAA Weather Radio tests, which can be heard if actively listening to a weather radio at 1:45 p.m. and 6:45 p.m. Some communities may also choose to test their outdoor warning sirens during the drill times, so don't be alarmed if you hear a siren on April 7!

“Being prepared for tornadoes and severe weather goes beyond Tornado and Severe Weather Awareness Week,” said Engle. “It’s a year-round effort, and how well you prepare for a disaster today can impact your ability to recover tomorrow.”

Share on social media how you’re participating by using the hashtag **#TornadoDrillWI**

For more tips on severe weather preparedness and advice on creating your own emergency plan, visit <https://readywisconsin.wi.gov>. You can also follow ReadyWisconsin on Facebook (<https://facebook.com/ReadyWisconsin>) and Twitter (<https://twitter.com/ReadyWisconsin>) for tips on emergency preparedness throughout the year!



# Wisconsin Tornadoes 2021

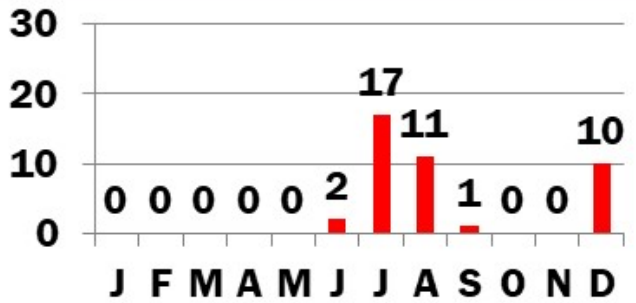
#	Date	County	Location	Mag	Length	Width	Death/Inj
1	6/24	Rusk	Bruce	0	0.84 mi	25 yd	0/0
2	6/24	Chippewa	Stanley	0	0.19 mi	25 yd	0/0
3	7/28	Lincoln & Marathon	Merrill	1	2.68 mi	300 yd	0/0
4*	7/28	Marathon	Bevent	0	0.22 mi	100 yd	0/0
5	7/28	St. Croix	Hammond	1	5.66 mi	100 yd	0/0
6*	7/28	Waushara	Borth	0	0.47 mi	33 yd	0/0
7	7/29	Columbia	Portage	1	2.29 mi	100 yd	0/0
8	7/29	Dane	Cross Plains #1	0	4.95 mi	50 yd	0/0
9	7/29	Dane	Cross Plains #2	1	2.81 mi	250 yd	0/0
10	7/29	Columbia	Columbus	0	0.43 mi	50 yd	0/0
11	7/29	Dane	Verona #1	1	2.47 mi	125 yd	0/0
12	7/29	Dane	Verona #2	0	3.58 mi	75 yd	0/0
13	7/29	Jefferson	Watertown	0	6.11 mi	100 yd	0/0
14	7/29	Jefferson & Waukesha	Concord	1	8.38 mi	200 yd	0/0
15	7/29	Jefferson	Farmington	0	3.66 mi	25 yd	0/0
16	7/29	Jefferson & Waukesha	Dousman #1	1	3.06 mi	150 yd	0/0
17	7/29	Waukesha	Dousman #2	1	1.03 mi	75 yd	0/0
18	7/29	Waukesha	Wales	0	2.44 mi	50 yd	0/0
19	7/29	Waukesha	Waukesha	1	0.91 mi	150 yd	0/0
20	8/7	Grant	Boscobel	3	10.6 mi	1100yd	0/0
21	8/7	Iowa	Highland	1	7.80 mi	50 yd	0/0
22	8/8	Waushara	Coloma	1	3.48 mi	325 yd	0/0
23	8/9	Rock	Clinton	0	3.26 mi	25 yd	0/0
24	8/10	Outagamie	Nichols	1	2.05 mi	40 yd	0/0
25	8/11	Monroe	Norwalk	1	5.90 mi	80 yd	0/0
26	8/11	Monroe	Wilton	1	3.04 mi	75 yd	0/0



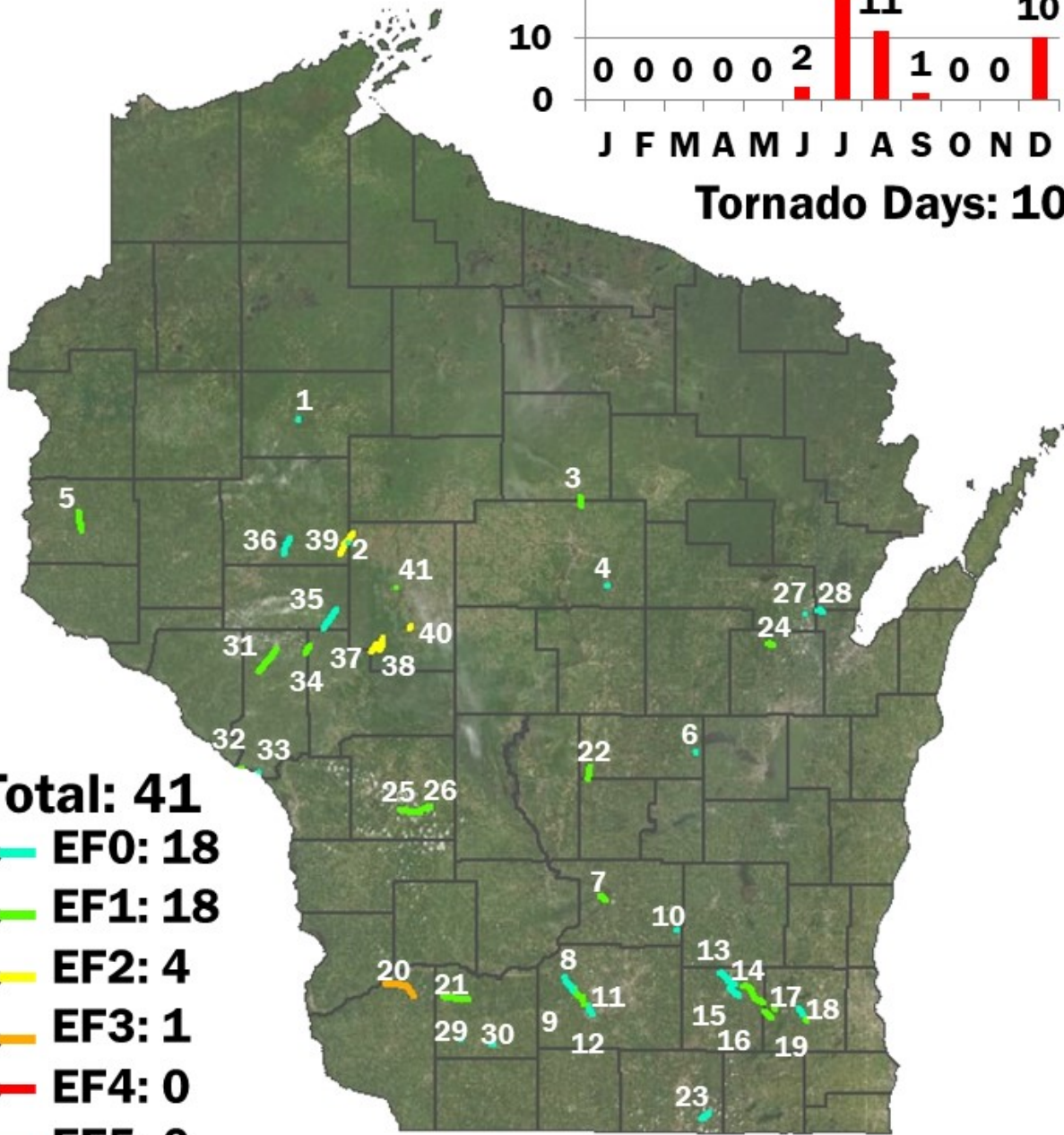


# Wisconsin Tornadoes 2021

Updated: 1/21/22



**Tornado Days: 10**



**Total: 41**

- EF0: 18
- EF1: 18
- EF2: 4
- EF3: 1
- EF4: 0
- EF5: 0



**National Weather Service**



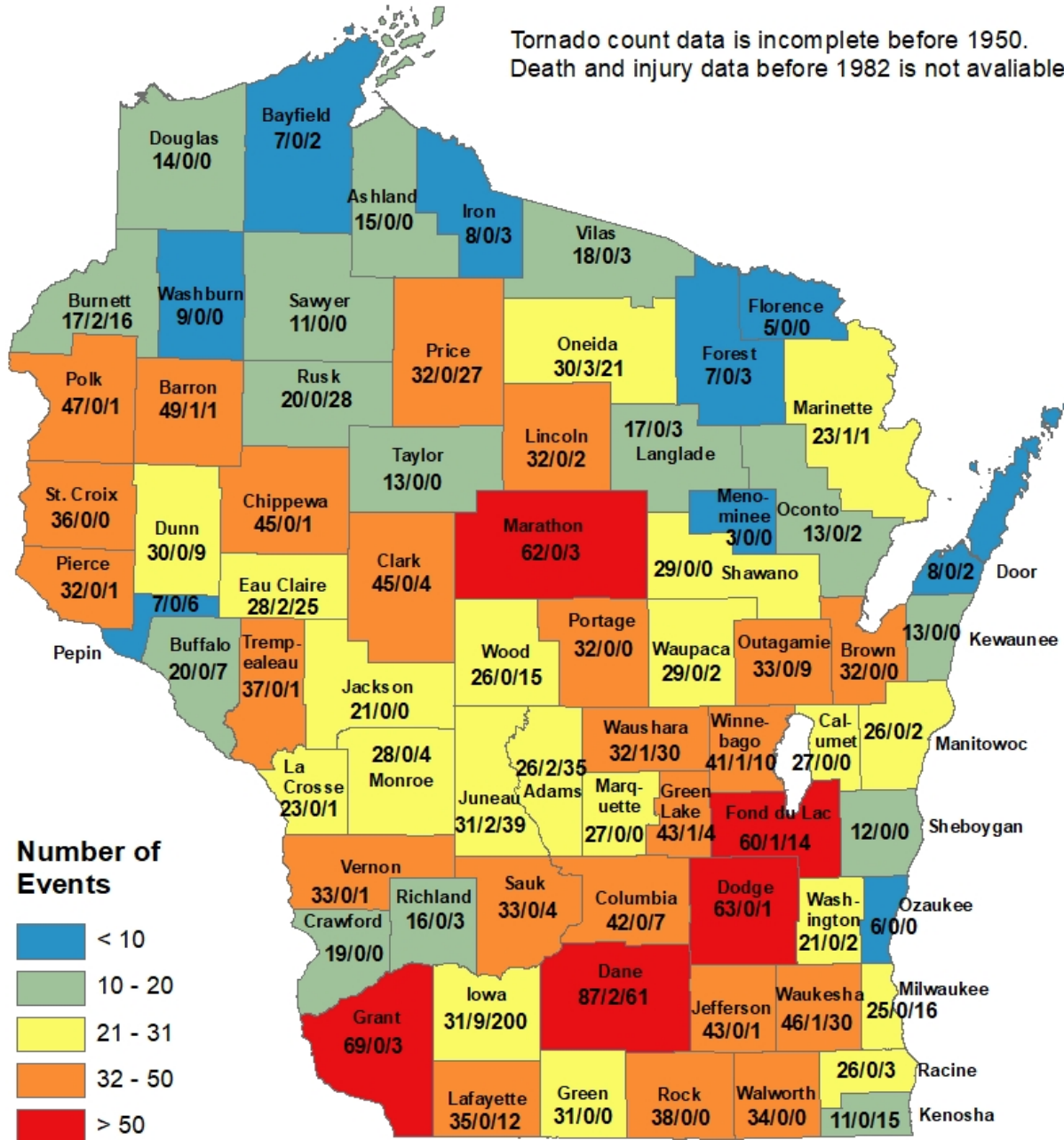
# Wisconsin Tornado Events

1844 - 2021

# Events / # Deaths / # Injuries



Tornado count data is incomplete before 1950.  
Death and injury data before 1982 is not available.

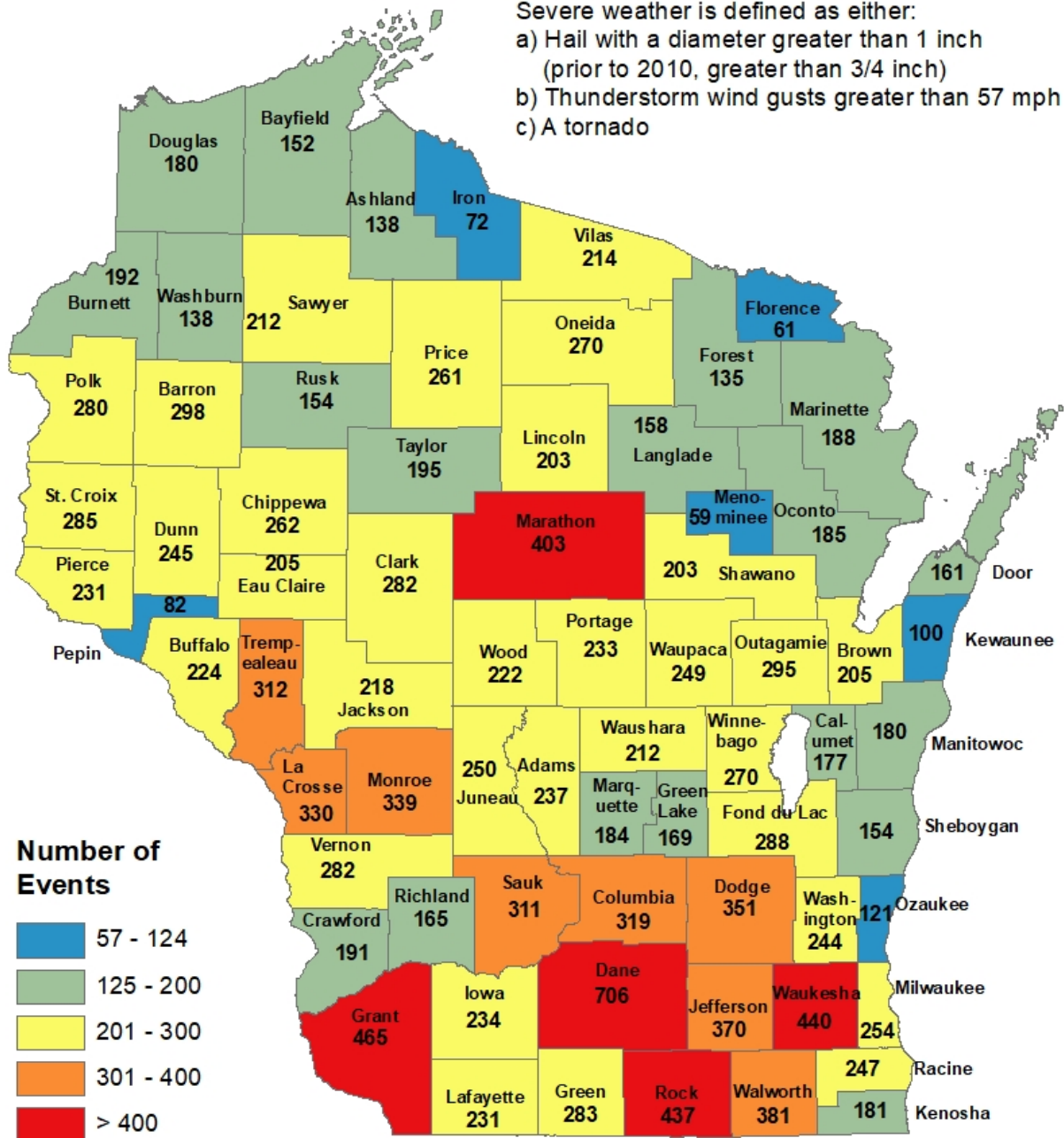




# Wisconsin Total Severe Weather Events 1844 - 2021



Severe weather is defined as either:  
a) Hail with a diameter greater than 1 inch (prior to 2010, greater than 3/4 inch)  
b) Thunderstorm wind gusts greater than 57 mph  
c) A tornado







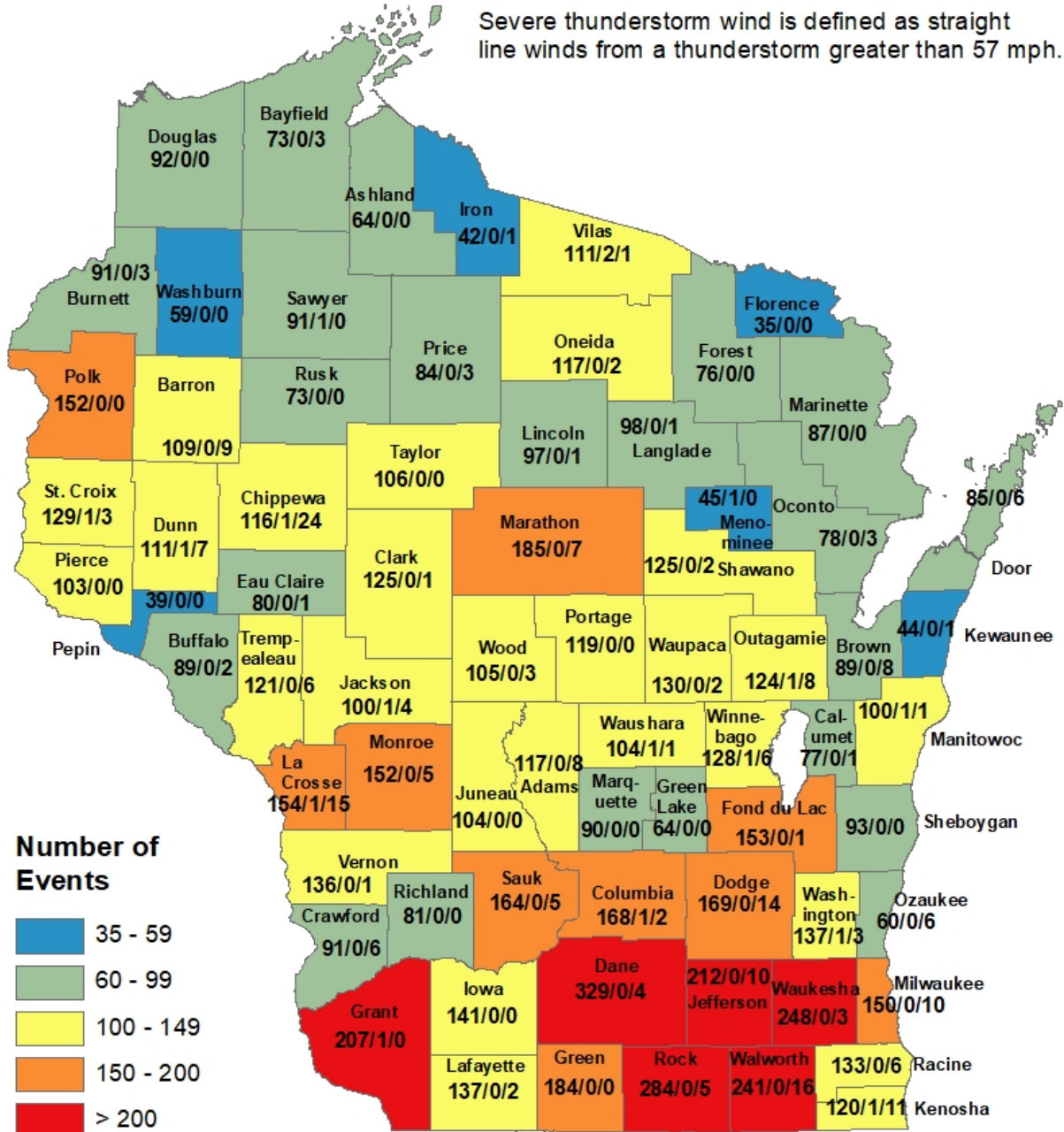
# Wisconsin Severe Thunderstorm Wind Events

1844 - 2021

# Events / # Deaths / # Injuries



Severe thunderstorm wind is defined as straight line winds from a thunderstorm greater than 57 mph.





## **Severe Weather Watches and Warnings**

When conditions are favorable for severe weather to develop, the National Weather Service (NWS) will issue a WATCH. When a Watch is issued, make sure you have a source of weather information in the event storms begin to form.

When severe weather has formed, NWS meteorologists will issue a WARNING to immediately alert the public and to advise them to seek appropriate shelter. **A warning indicates there is an imminent danger to life and property to those in the path of the storm.**

Watches and Warnings are relayed to local radio and television stations and are broadcast on NOAA Weather Radios. Public safety officials also receive warnings and can activate local warning systems, like outdoor sirens, to alert communities. You may also receive warning information on mobile devices.

**Tornado Watch:** Severe thunderstorms with tornadoes are possible in your area. Remain alert for approaching storms. Be prepared to move to safety if a **warning** is issued. Know what counties are in the watch area by listening to NOAA Weather Radio All Hazards or local radio/television stations.

**Severe Thunderstorm Watch:** Thunderstorms with large hail and damaging winds are possible. Be prepared to move to safety if a **warning** is issued.

**Tornado Warning:** A tornado has been sighted or indicated by weather radar. Move to a place of safety now.

**Severe Thunderstorm Warning:** A thunderstorm with large hail or damaging winds has been reported or indicated by weather radar.

## **Tornado Safety Before the Storm**

Being ready for severe weather starts before there are even storms in the forecast. Make sure you are taking several precautions at home, work, and school to ensure everyone remains safe when severe weather threatens.

- Develop a plan for you and your family for home, work, school and outdoors.
- Know the safest shelter areas in multiple locations and regularly practice your plan.
- Keep a disaster supply kit in your home including water, food that won't spoil and needs no heat to serve, first-aid kit, NOAA Weather Radio (also known as an emergency weather radio), a flashlight and special items for children, pets and elderly family members.
- Make sure you have multiple ways to receive weather information. A NOAA Weather Radio, access to local TV, and smart phone apps can keep you informed when severe weather threatens.
- If you have a smart phone, make sure your device is enabled to receive Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA). These life-saving messages can provide critical early warnings about approaching dangerous weather conditions.

## **Tornado Safety During the Storm**

Whether at home, work, or school, it's important to have a plan in place for what to do when severe weather is approaching.

- In a home or building, move to a pre-designated shelter, such as a basement, and get under a sturdy table or the stairs. A specially-constructed "safe room" within a building offers the best protection.
- If a basement is not available, move to a small interior room on the lowest floor and cover yourself with anything close at hand: towels, blankets, pillows. If possible, get under a sturdy table, desk, or counter. Put as many walls as possible between you and the storm. Stay away from windows.
- If caught outdoors, seek shelter in a sturdy building. If you cannot quickly walk to shelter, get into a vehicle, buckle your seatbelt and drive to the closest sturdy shelter. If flying debris occurs while you are driving, pull over and park. Now you have two options as a last resort:
  - Stay in the vehicle with the seatbelt on and place your head below the windows.
  - If you can safely get noticeably lower than the roadway, exit the vehicle and lie in that area, covering your head with your hands. Do not seek shelter under an overpass.
- Mobile homes, even if tied down, offer little protection from tornadoes. You should leave a mobile home and go to the designated storm shelter or the lowest floor of a sturdy nearby building.

## **Lightning Safety Tips**

Lightning can be a major safety concern during storms. Know the risks and how to protect yourself from lightning strikes.

- All thunderstorms produce lightning and are dangerous. Since 2006, lightning has killed an average of 28 people in the U.S. each year. During that time period, it also has killed ten people and injured at least 41 in Wisconsin.
- Lightning often strikes outside the area of heavy rain and may strike as far as 10 miles from any rainfall.
- If you hear thunder, you are in danger! Anytime thunder is heard, the storm is close enough to pose an immediate threat to your location.
- Have a lightning safety plan. Designate a safe location before the event starts. Have specific guidelines for suspending the activity so that everyone has time to reach safety.
- Prior to a practice or outdoor event, check the latest forecast. If thunderstorms are expected, consider postponing activities early to avoid being caught in a dangerous situation.
- If you hear thunder, suspend your activity immediately and instruct everyone to get to a safe place. Substantial buildings provide the best protection. Avoid sheds, open shelters, dugouts, bleachers, and grandstands. If a sturdy building is not nearby, a hard-topped metal vehicle with windows closed will offer good protection. Do not crouch or lie down—continue moving to a place of shelter.
- If boating or swimming, get to land and find shelter.
- Do not resume activities until 30 minutes have passed since the last thunder was heard.

## **Flooding Safety Tips**

Flooding is one of Wisconsin's most common natural disasters, causing millions of dollars in property damage each year. Know the facts and keep yourself safe when floodwaters rise!

- There were 148 deaths nationwide in 2021 due to flooding. There were none in Wisconsin last year.
- Many floods occur along streams and rivers. You can determine your risk by knowing your proximity to the water and looking at flood plain maps.
- Urban areas have a risk for flash floods due to increased runoff from buildings, roads, and parking lots. Low spots, such as underpasses and basements, can be extremely dangerous.
- Dam failures have played a deadly role in the history of flash flooding. Be aware of dams upstream from your location. Earthen dams and associated embankments are more easily compromised by heavy rainfall.
- When camping or hiking near a stream or river, listen to the latest weather forecasts and keep away from the water if thunderstorms are expected. If a warning is issued or flooding is observed, move to higher ground.
- Do not attempt to walk or drive through a flooded roadway or intersection. Damage to the roadway may not be visible. Just six inches of fast-flowing water can knock an adult off their feet. Most small vehicles can be moved by just 12 inches of water and 18-24 inches can float larger SUVs, vans, and trucks. Turn around, don't drown!
- During times of heavy rain, those near areas with steep terrain should watch for rock or mudslides.

## **Stay informed with an All-Hazards NOAA Weather Radio**

Many people believe outdoor sirens will notify them when a tornado is approaching, however those devices are only designed to be heard by people who are outside. Make sure you have a way to receive notifications inside your home, school, or office by getting a NOAA Weather Radio. These devices act like a "smoke alarm" for severe weather!

- NOAA Weather Radio (NWR) is a public warning system that broadcasts forecasts, warnings, and emergency information 24 hours a day.
- Radio receivers can quietly monitor these broadcasts and will alert when important and life-threatening messages are issued for your area.
- "All Hazards" messages include:
  - Natural disasters (e.g., tornado, floods, blizzards)
  - Accidents, such as chemical release, train derailments, nuclear power emergencies)
  - Terrorist Attacks
- During an emergency, seconds count! These radios are a valuable alerting device, easy to use, and can also be used to check on every-day weather, including wind chill information during the winter. If your school doesn't have a weather radio, make sure to purchase one before severe weather season starts.
- Place weather radios in areas that are constantly monitored (e.g., school office, principal's office). Remember those occasions when the school is used for activities outside normal hours and make sure the radio can be monitored during those times.
- Weather radios are tested weekly. Make sure yours works!

NOAA Weather Radio Home Page - [www.weather.gov/nwr](http://www.weather.gov/nwr)  
NWR coverage in Wisconsin - [www.weather.gov/mkx/nwr](http://www.weather.gov/mkx/nwr)  
Educational Communications Board map - <https://ecb.org/NOAA.html>

## **Wireless Emergency Alerts**

Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA) are weather and non-weather messages sent directly to cell phones in areas affected by an emergency. You can ensure these alerts are enabled on your device by checking under the “notifications” section of the settings menu on most smart devices.

These short messages may look like text messages, but they are broadcast to all phones within range of cell towers in the alerted area. The alerts will tell you the type of warning, the affected area, and the duration of the event. Weather alerts sent as a WEA in Wisconsin include Tornado Warnings and Flash Flood Warnings.

For more information on WEAs and a list of participating carriers, visit FEMA’s Wireless Emergency Alert web site: <http://fema.gov/wireless-emergency-alerts>.

## **For more information**

Check out these web sites for more safety tips, the latest weather forecast, and other weather awareness information.

### **NOAA National Weather Service**

<https://weather.gov>

Click on your part of the state for local weather information. Wisconsin has five NWS offices that cover different regions of the state. Find the NWS on Facebook and Twitter by searching for your local office name.

### **ReadyWisconsin**

Web - <https://readywisconsin.wi.gov>

Facebook - <http://www.facebook.com/ReadyWisconsin>

Twitter – <https://www.twitter.com/ReadyWisconsin>

Instagram - <http://www.instagram.com/ReadyWisconsin>

### **STEP (Student Tools for Emergency Planning)**

<https://readywisconsin.wi.gov/STEP>

### **Wisconsin Emergency Management**

<https://wem.wi.gov>

### **For Kids: Be a Force of Nature!**

<http://weather.gov/grb/prep>

### **Tornado Preparedness Plan for Schools**

<https://www.weather.gov/arx/schoolprep>

### **FEMA for Kids**

<https://www.ready.gov/kids>



## **Wisconsin Tornado Weather Facts**

- There were 41 tornadoes in Wisconsin in 2021, which is above average. In the last 15 years we've had as many as 62 tornadoes and as few as 4.
- The peak tornado season in Wisconsin is April to August, but they can occur any time of year, like an outbreak of 10 tornadoes on December 15, 2022. February is the only month without a reported tornado in Wisconsin.
- Tornadoes can occur any time during the day or night, but are most frequent between 4 p.m. and 9 p.m.
- About 80% of tornadoes that hit Wisconsin are relatively weak, with winds under 110 mph. Only 1% are violent with winds over 165 mph.

## **Other Weather Awareness Dates in Wisconsin**

NOAA Weather Radio  
Awareness Day  
*May 4, 2022*

Heat Awareness  
Day *June 1, 2022*

Lightning Safety  
Awareness Day  
*June 21, 2022*

Winter Weather  
Awareness Week  
*Nov.14-18, 2022*