



Tornadoes in Wisconsin

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What Are Tornadoes?

Tornadoes are fast-spinning columns of air that form in thunderstorms and extend to the ground.

They form when storm winds begin moving in different directions, causing the air caught between the winds to rotate. Tornadoes can be hard to spot, unless dust and debris get caught up in them.

Why Tornadoes Matters

1. Tornado winds can easily exceed 100 miles per hour, creating paths of destruction.
2. Tornadoes can form quickly, requiring safety to be sought swiftly.
3. Tornadoes have occurred in Wisconsin in every calendar month.

Wisconsin's Tornado Climatology

Historically, most Wisconsin tornadoes have occurred in June and July, which is also when most of the state's thunderstorms have occurred. Fall and winter tornadoes are more unusual, as it's rare for all necessary weather components to come together in the cold, dry environment.

The majority (80 percent) of the state's tornadoes produce estimated winds of 110 miles per hour or less.

Wisconsin averages 23 tornadoes per year.

How Can Wisconet Work for You?

Tornadoes can occur in Wisconsin at any time of day, in any season. To stay safe during a tornado, take shelter indoors away from windows on the lowest level of the building.

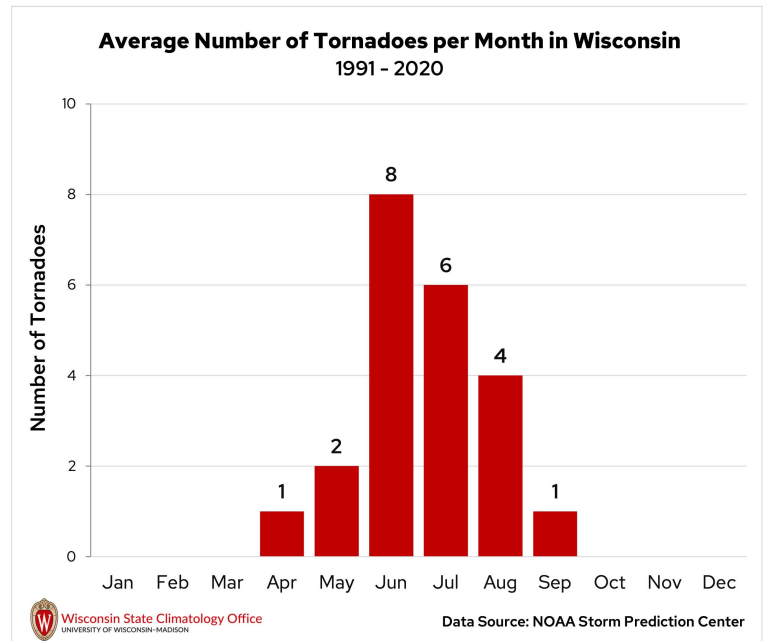


Figure 1: The average number of tornadoes that occur in Wisconsin each month, based on data from 1991 to 2020.

Learn more at: go.wisc.edu/tornadoes



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