



TEXAS DIVISION OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

HAIL AND SEVERE WIND STORMS

AUSTIN – Thousands of thunderstorms strike Texas every year, many of them severe. A severe thunderstorm is defined as a storm that produces winds of at least 58 mph, hail at least three-fourths of an inch in diameter or a tornado.

While tornadoes are extremely dangerous, wind and hail storms can do similar damage, so thunderstorms should never be taken for granted. Dangers include:

- Straight-line winds that blow in excess of 100 mph, strong enough to uproot trees, destroy crops and cause substantial damage to buildings and roofs.
- Downburst winds – severe and rapid downdrafts of air that push damaging winds outward on or near ground level, especially dangerous to aviation.
- Hail falling to earth at speeds nearing 50-to-75 mph, damaging trees, crops, automobiles and buildings. Hail storms cause more than \$1 billion in damage nationwide each year.

When severe weather threatens, monitor TV and radio broadcasts as well as NOAA weather radio for storm warnings and watches. When straight-line winds threaten, respond the same way you would to the threat of a tornado. Seek shelter in an interior room on the lowest floor, such as a bathroom, stairwell, hallway or closet. Stay away from windows. If you are outside, cover your head to protect against flying debris. Avoid highway overpasses.



For more information, contact TDEM Public Information at (512) 424-2138 or visit TDEM's Web site: www.txdps.state.tx.us/dem.