

# TORNADOES



## BIG, BAD TORNADO

MAY 22, 2011

People in Joplin, Missouri, watched the sky. It looked dark. They could tell that a scary tornado was coming. Tornadoes have winds that move at high speeds. They are the fastest winds on Earth. Because of this, tornadoes are dangerous.

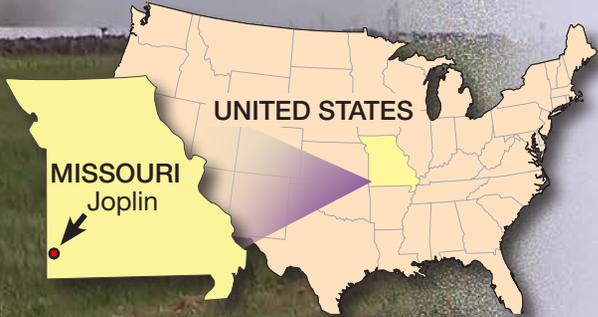


After a tornado, people have to clean up.

There it was! The people saw a cloud shaped like a funnel. The city turned on the tornado alarm. People went to safe places.

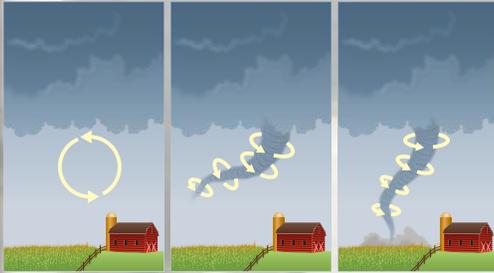
The tornado moved through the city. It picked up cars and blew down trees. The tornado huffed and puffed. It blew the houses down.

Tornadoes happen quickly. People have only a few minutes to get to a safe place.



# These Winds Make Me Dizzy

Tornadoes are natural winds. They start when cold air moves into an area with warm air. The air begins to spin. Wind starts blowing.



The air spins faster and faster. Now there is a spinning cloud that looks

like a funnel, called a *funnel cloud*. It touches the ground. This is a tornado! The tornado moves in many directions. It is over when the wind slows down.

Wowser!

The fastest wind ever measured was from a tornado in Oklahoma City. The wind moved almost as fast as a small jet airplane!



# Tornado Drill!

Some schools have tornado drills to keep kids safe. Students practice moving away from windows and doors. They may go into the hall. Then students crouch down and cover their heads with books.

This kind of practice might keep them safe someday.



Most tornadoes happen in the central United States. This area is called "Tornado Alley."