

Do You Need a Safe Room?

On the basis of 70 years of tornado history and more than 160 years of hurricane history, the United States has been divided roughly into four zones that geographically reflect the number and strength of recorded tornadoes. Zone IV has experienced the most and the strongest tornado activity. Zone III has experienced significant tornado activity and includes most coastal areas that are also susceptible to tornadoes spawned from

hurricanes. Zones II and I represent areas with relatively lower historical tornado activity that correlates with a lower risk of tornadoes in those areas. If you live on or very near one of the delineation lines, use the highest adjacent wind zone. Remember, tornadoes can happen anywhere! More information can be found in FEMA P-320, *Taking Shelter from the Storm: Building or Installing a Safe Room for Your Home*.

Safe Room Risk Based on Location

TORNADO ZONE OR COASTAL REGION	RISK	GUIDANCE
I	Low Risk	The need for an extreme-wind safe room is a matter of homeowner preference.
II	Moderate Risk	A safe room should be considered for protection from extreme winds.
III and IV	High Risk	A safe room is the preferred method of protection from extreme winds.
Hurricane-Prone Regions and Coastal High Wind Region	High Risk	A safe room is the preferred method of protection from extreme winds. FEMA recommends that all potential safe room occupants comply with local jurisdictional directions and evacuation orders during an emergency event, even if they have constructed a safe room.

Wind Hazards in the United States

