Checklist: What To Do After A Tornado Hits Your Home

1. 🛑 Before Exiting the Shelter

- ☐ Confirm tornado warnings have ended
- ☐ Stay alert for additional storms
- ☐ Check for injuries inside the shelter

2. ⚠️ Exit Safely

- ☐ Watch for downed power lines (assume live)
- ☐ Smell for gas or hear hissing
- ☐ Avoid broken glass, nails, and sharp debris
- ☐ Stay clear of unstable trees or structures
- ☐ Avoid standing or moving in floodwater
- ☐ If gas, sparks, or instability are present, **get away immediately**

3. 👨‍👩‍👧‍👦 / 🐾 Check Family & Pets

- ☐ Check everyone for injuries
- ☐ Provide first aid as needed
- ☐ Call 911 for severe injuries (expect delays)
- ☐ Leash or crate pets immediately
- ☐ Check pets for injuries
- ☐ Be cautious of stressed or injured animals

4. 📞 Communicate

- ☐ Send a text or social media post confirming you are safe
- ☐ Avoid sharing unverified damage details

5. 🏠Home Safety

Do NOT enter if the home is leaning, flooded, or smells of gas

If you do enter:

- ☐ Wear sturdy shoes, gloves, and eye protection
- ☐ Photograph damage before touching anything
- ☐ Shut off electricity, gas, and water if damage is suspected
- ☐ Obey all official safety tags (once damage assessments begin)

6. 🛌 Temporary Shelter

- ☐ Decide if the home is habitable
- ☐ Arrange temporary shelter if needed
- ☐ Keep receipts for hotels, meals, and essentials
- ☐ Find a pet-friendly shelter (boarding, friends, family)

7. 🔌Utilities (If Home Is Not Habitable)

- ☐ Contact the electric company for a temporary disconnection
- ☐ Contact the gas provider to shut off service at the meter
- ☐ Contact the water company if plumbing is damaged
- ☐ Ask about pausing or reducing billing

8. 💰Insurance & Financial

- ☐ Contact your home insurance company
- ☐ Document damage and losses
- ☐ Keep all receipts
- ☐ Contact your mortgage lender if the home is severely damaged and ask for disaster forbearance (payments do NOT stop automatically)

9. 🤝Disaster Assistance

- ☐ Contact the American Red Cross if needed
- ☐ Apply for FEMA assistance if a disaster is declared

10. 🚫Avoid Scams

- ☐ Be cautious of pressure tactics
- ☐ Avoid cash-only offers
- ☐ Verify contractor credentials

🎗️ Final Reminder

- Safety first
- Take recovery one step at a time
- Don’t rush major decisions