



U.S. Department of Commerce
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
National Weather Service

Johnson County, Iowa Severe Weather Risk Assessment (Updated June 2026)

Quick-Response Severe Weather Threats

Tornado	In extreme cases, wind speeds can exceed 200 mph; however, 74% have wind less than 110 mph. Most fatalities occur with the stronger tornado. Recommendation: Seek immediate shelter in a basement without windows.	
Severe Thunderstorm Wind	Severe wind speeds range from near 60 mph (scattered damage, typically tree branches) to over 120 mph (widespread tornado-like damage). Recommendation: Seek immediate shelter indoors away from windows. For winds over 70 mph, seek shelter in a basement without windows.	
Large Hail	Can reach the size of softballs. Recommendation: Seek immediate shelter indoors away from windows.	

Severe Weather Injuries/Fatalities in Johnson County, IA - 1995-2023

	Injuries	Fatalities	Notes
Tornado	49	0	Tornado injuries: 5/15/1998, 4/13/2006, 3/31/2023
Thunderstorm Wind	13	1	Wind fatality 5/29/11; injuries 6/29/1998 and 6/30/14

Severe Weather Events in Johnson County, IA - 1995-2026

	Extreme Hail (golf ball or larger)	Extreme Wind (70 mph or greater measured gusts/damage is not included)	Tornado
Total Events	34	54	27
Average per year	1.1	1.7	0.9
Most in one year	4	7	6

Severe Weather Warnings* for Johnson County, IA - 1995-2026

	Tornado Warnings	Severe Thunderstorm Warnings
Warning Basis	Tornado indicated by radar or trained spotters	Thunderstorm with wind over 58 mph and/or quarter sized (1") hail or larger
Average lead time 2007-2026	9 minutes	20 minutes
Average per year	2.5	13.8
Most in one year*	6	34

Johnson County, IA Risk Assessment *(continued)*

Notes

- Hail golf ball sized and larger can break house and car windows.
- Severe thunderstorm wind over 70 mph can down whole trees.
- The greatest risk factors for tornado fatalities include being outdoors or in a mobile home, overnight hours, weekends or holidays, and occurrences outside the normal “season”

Other Thunderstorm Threats

Lightning:

- Warnings are not issued for lightning because all thunderstorms produce lightning, and all cloud-to-ground lightning is potentially fatal.
- When thunder can be heard or lightning seen, the lightning is within “striking distance”.

Recommendation: Remain indoors during all thunderstorms due to the lightning threat. Wait 30 minutes after the last thunder is heard before resuming outdoor activities.



Flash Floods:

- A flash flood occurs within a very short time (generally 6 hours or less) relative to the rainfall.
- Flash Flood Warnings are issued for those storms that produce extreme rainfall rates leading to flash floods.
- Currently, the average lead time for Flash Flood Warnings is 55 minutes.

Recommendation: Initiate flash flood mitigation measures. Flood prone streets should be monitored and barricaded as necessary. People living in flood-prone areas should move to higher ground.



Additional Information

For more information, contact:

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Resources

National Weather Service Quad Citieswww.weather.gov/dvn/
National Storm Event Databasewww.ncei.noaa.gov
Impact-Based Warningswww.weather.gov/impacts