

STORM SHELTERS



As people in Moore discovered after a May 1999 tornado that killed dozens of people, the shelters work.

A researcher said that the units survived - and so did the people hiding inside of them.

Some government money has been provided to people to build safe rooms in Oklahoma over the past several years.

These individuals received support from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (Fema) through a programme known as SoonerSafe. For those who were selected for the scheme, the federal agency paid for 75% of the cost of building a shelter.

A state programme, Operation Safe Room, also provided funds for people in Oklahoma who wanted to build shelters.

Altogether more than 10,000 shelters have been built in Oklahoma with the support of the government, according to a June 2011 article in the Journal Record Legislative Report, an Oklahoma City-based business and legal newspaper.

In other parts of Oklahoma, there are 382 federally funded safe rooms or shelters that are available to the public, according to a Fema spokesperson.

Hundreds of these facilities are located throughout Tornado Alley. Three states, Arkansas, Missouri and Kansas, have more than 150 of the public shelters, and Texas has 49.

Yet those who have seen a tornado do not necessarily invest in a bunker.

"It's the afterthought," says Jeremy Davis, the owner of Twister Safe, a Missouri-based firm that builds storm shelters.

There's no safe place inside a mobile homeDirk DeRose, Owner, New Day Tornado Shelters

"It's, 'Well, it hit. It probably won't hit again,'" says Davis.

"But it's the kind of thing that when you need it, you need it."

Still a decision can be made late.

By Tara McKelvey - BBC News Magazine - 22 May 2013

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