

Adding a Storm Shelter

One factor homeowners consider as they view a potential property is emergency management.

Adding a storm shelter to your existing home not only adds value, it gives buyers peace of mind that they have a safe place to wait out severe weather or other dangerous situations.

Before going to market, analyze your property's ability to offer protection.

If your home lacks a basement or spacious crawl space, you can consider installing an exterior storm shelter.

Of course, this process is best left to professionals as it will require extensive excavating and planning.

Whether you are considering this addition for your forever home or aiming to spruce up your space before putting it up for sale, there are several options to consider.

SHELTER TYPES

If you live in an area that experiences severe weather, you are likely familiar with in-ground shelters. Did you know there is an above-ground option that offers just as much protection?

There are advantages and disadvantages to each, so consider which one works best for your property and space.



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ABOVE-GROUND SHELTERS

For those who live in cities or properties with little outdoor space, an interior safe room is a great asset to entice buyers with a unique safety feature. Installation of this option is

much less labor intensive than its in-ground counterpart and can be set up in nearly any room.

Many families choose to set them up in closets, garages or even a pantry. For those with handicaps or who have trouble

walking, an above-ground shelter is your best bet.

Check with your sales team to ensure the unit is constructed of heavy-duty steel and can lock from the inside. They are not only perfect for a storm shelter but also efficient as

panic rooms in case of danger on the property.

With all the great things to say about above-ground shelters, there are a few negative aspects to consider. The biggest downside is if you are short on room inside, they can seriously reduce your square footage.

However, with the right planning and assistance from shelter experts, this addition can be a welcome advantage to those viewing a home, or to a family that takes their safety seriously.

IN-GROUND SHELTERS

When you are in an area with a tornado season, you have heard your local weather service advise you to seek shelter in a basement as the storm approaches. If adding this underground safe spot isn't an option, an in-ground shelter can be just as effective.

According to the experts at Home Advisor, the 2018 national average storm shelter cost was \$5,681. While it might be a hit to many budgets, the safety advantages are priceless.

When deciding where to place an in-ground shelter, make sure it's close to your home. This can help you get to safety sooner and avoid entering stormy conditions as you rush you to your shelter. If you have an attached garage, ask your service specialist about installing the unit in this space.



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REAL ESTATE 101



FEMA Recommended

The Federal Emergency Management Agency urges property owners and builders to consider adding a specially constructed shelter room to both new and existing homes. A safe room is designed to provide a space where you, your family and pets can survive a tornado. According to information on FEMA.gov, shelters built below ground level provide the greatest safety, but a shelter built in a first floor interior room can also provide effective protection. FEMA recommends that homeowners deal only with licensed contractors.

HOMESWISE GLOSSARY

Flood insurance: Insurance that compensates for physical property damage resulting from flooding. It is required for properties located in federally designated flood hazard zones.

SOURCE: Federal Trade Commission

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