



FEMA

Money Well Spent in Arkansas

Baxter County, AR – On February 5, 2008, when a tornado visited the town of Gassville, Arkansas, Jeanann Quattlebaum felt a certain calmness. Less than ten months prior, she and her husband, Robert, had purchased a storm shelter.

The Quattlebaums have been living in their subdivision for seven years. They purchased their home, which was not equipped with a safe room, from an area builder.

Arkansas is one of several states in “Tornado Alley,” a term used to describe a broad area of relatively high tornado occurrences in central United States. The state ranks fourth, after Texas, Oklahoma, and Kansas, with tornadoes that are F3 and higher.

Arkansas Residential Safe Room Program assists Arkansas homeowners who choose to install a shelter or safe room on their property. The program covers up to 50 percent of the cost and installation, not to exceed \$1000.00, for shelters or safe rooms built on or after January 21, 1999.

The Quattlebaum’s storm shelter was purchased at a cost of \$2000.00. They received a \$1000.00 rebate from the state. The circular concrete structure is 10 feet in diameter and stands five feet tall. It has the capacity to seat six to eight individuals. During the tornado event of February 5, 2008, it housed six as the tornado touched the lives of Gassville residents. The tornado left behind one fatality and damages to homes and property, which ranged from minimal to extensive.

With proper installation, storm shelters and safe rooms serve as protection from injury or death caused by the dangerous forces of extreme winds. They can also relieve some of the anxiety created by the threat of an oncoming tornado or hurricane.

The decision to build or purchase a shelter should include notifying local emergency managers and family members or others outside the immediate area. This will allow emergency personnel to quickly free the exit should it become blocked by debris.



**Baxter County,
Arkansas**



Quick Facts

Sector:

Private

Cost:

\$2,000.00 (Actual)

Primary Activity/Project:

Safe Rooms/Community Shelters

Primary Funding:

State sources