



Dust storms and Haboobs can occur anywhere including Illinois! A dust storm is a wall of dust and debris that is often blown into an area by strong winds from thunderstorms. They are a result of a thunderstorm outflow of winds which can drastically reduce visibility. Your National Weather Service office has been tasked to issue dust storm warnings.

Dust storms arrive suddenly and form an advancing wall of dust and debris. This zero-visibility could be miles long and several thousands of feet high making driving conditions dangerous. Blinding, choking dust can quickly reduce visibility causing accidents including chain collisions and massive pileups. Immediate actions during a dust storm will be the most important safety decisions of their lives.

- The term haboob comes from a weather phenomenon in Sudan where the city is frequently hit by huge walls of dust
- If caught in a vehicle on the road in a dust storm:
 - Slow down immediately and close all windows and stop air intake (turn off A/C)
 - Pull completely off the road (preferably off pavement)
 - Turn off headlights and taillights as it helps other motorists so they don't think you're driving and follow you
 - Put on your parking brake and keep your seatbelt on
- If outside when a dust storm descends upon you
 - Get inside and avoid any outside activity
 - Cover nose and mouth with mask, respirator, or damp cloth
- Breathing dusty air during a dust storm could cause health problems — especially for people with asthma or respiratory challenges.
- Dust storms can carry diseases. Along with sand, they also carry bacteria and viruses
- It is possible for a person to suffocate due to the inability to breathe normally, as sand and dust particles clog the airways
- Drought is one contributing factor that causes dust storms

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