

Severe Weather

ATTACHMENT A

Weather emergencies are defined as thunderstorms, lightning, tornado, severe rain, extreme cold, snow and ice storms.

Weather alert radios are located in all facilities. In anticipation of dangerous weather, these radios are monitored by a designated staff member for the duration of the time that the facility is open.

The District has installed Thor Guard lightning detection systems and the horns are placed at the following locations: Maine East High School, North Park, Northwest Park (Franklin School), Oakton Park, Woodland Park, Ni-Ridge Park, Jefferson/Emerson School site, Hodges Park, Northeast Park (Field School), Maine Park, Carpenter School, Hinkley Park, Centennial Park (Lincoln/Washington Schools), Maine South High School, South Park (Roosevelt School), Jaycee Park, Brickton Park, Southwest, and Prospect Park.

The systems are designed to alert staff and patrons when the weather conditions exist where a lightning strike could be possible. When the alert siren sounds, staff ceases outdoor operations and clears everyone from the outdoor areas into the building. Staff and patrons are required to wait for the "All Clear" siren before resuming outdoor activities. (One long blast – clear area; 3 short blasts – continue activities.)

The news media within the Chicago area uses the following steps to inform the public of a possible or approaching tornado:

Tornado Watch

Conditions exist which may result in a tornado within the area outlined. This is the time to remind your staff of the weather safe area in the facility and to listen to the radio for further developments.

Tornado Warning

A tornado has actually been sighted or its presence detected on radar in the area outlined in the tornado watch. Warning will indicate where the tornado was discovered and the area through which it is issued. Immediate safety precautions should be taken. All staff and patrons should move to the weather safe area in the facility immediately and wait for the warning to expire.

The City of Park Ridge operates a warning system to alert residents of impending tornado activity. A test of the weather-warning siren is conducted on the first Tuesday of the month at 10 a.m.

Facility Supervisors/Managers and Program Supervisors are responsible for alerting activity and group leaders within their area of responsibility of the potential for hazardous weather activity. Each program/activity should have its own facility or program specific procedures for reacting to potentially dangerous weather. This includes groups that use recreational areas of the District on a rental basis.

The safety of District patrons and employees is our primary concern. Supervisors/Managers are charged with using common sense and erring on the side of caution when making decisions on curtailing or canceling activities. If imminent danger is judged to exist, children should not be released unless a parent or designated responsible adult is present, and then only after warning the adult of the potential hazard.

Each Facility Supervisor/Manager is charged with communicating the best location for patrons and employees to move in the event of a weather emergency. These locations need to be displayed on all evacuation maps.

The following basic steps should be taken for the two most common weather emergencies: lightning/thunder and tornadoes.

1. Lightning/Thunder
 - a. Stay calm.
 - b. Follow Thor Guard Alert System, if it does not sound, suspend programming for a minimum of 15 minutes from the last sighting of lightning/thunder.
 - c. Move all patrons and employees indoors or to other appropriate shelter for that facility/program.
2. Tornado
 - a. Stay calm.
 - b. Warn everyone of impending severe weather.
 - c. Move all patrons and employees to the appropriate weather safe area for that facility/program.