

Inclement Weather Safety

This fact sheet introduces the main types of weather alerts, watches, warnings, and advisories issued by meteorological agencies to help the University community prepare and respond effectively. Each alert type signals a different level of urgency and requires specific actions, from remaining vigilant to taking immediate shelter.

Weather Alerts

Alert Type:		Definition:	Recommended Actions:
Extreme Temperature 	Heat Advisory	- Issued for dangerous heat conditions that are not expected to reach warning criteria. - Heat Index of 95°F or wet-bulb globe temp of 83°F for 3 hours or more.	- Consider postponing or rescheduling outdoor activities, especially during the heat of the day. - If you must be outside, be sure to drink plenty of water and take frequent breaks in the shade. - Stay in a cool place, especially during the heat of the day and evening. - Consider limiting strenuous outdoor activity to 1 hour or less. - Provide routine rest breaks in the shade.
	Extreme Heat Warning	- Issued when extremely dangerous heat conditions are expected or occurring. - Heat Index of 105°F or wet-bulb globe temp of 87°F for 3 hours or more	- Consider rescheduling outdoor activities. - Stay indoors in an air-conditioned space as much as possible, including overnight. - If you must be outside, be sure to drink plenty of water and take frequent breaks in the shade. - Consider altering outdoor tasks to cooler times of the day such as mornings or evenings.
	Cold Advisory	- Issued for dangerously cold conditions that are not expected to reach warning criteria. - Wind Chill of -25°F to -35°F or lower	- Dress appropriately and cover exposed skin when going outdoors. - Adjust plans to avoid being outside during the coldest parts of the day. - Make sure your vehicle has at least half a tank of gas and update your winter survival kit. - Campus will consider the need for reduced operations.
	Extreme Cold Warning	- Issued when extremely dangerous cold conditions or wind chill values are expected or occurring - Wind Chill or Air Temperature of -35°F to -40°F or lower	- Avoid going outside if possible. - If you must go outside, dress in layers, cover exposed skin, and make sure at least one other person knows your whereabouts. - Campus will consider the need for reduced operations.

Alert Type:		Definition:	Recommended Actions:
Winter Storm 	Winter Storm Warning	Snow, sleet, or ice expected. Take action. Confidence is high that a winter storm will produce heavy snow, sleet, or freezing rain and cause significant impacts.	• Avoid going outside, find shelter inside of a building. • Dress appropriately, wear layers, and stay dry. • Consider working remotely or altering work hours if possible. • Campus will consider the need for reduced operations.
	Blizzard Warning	Sustained wind or frequent gusts greater than or equal to 35 mph accompanied by falling and/or blowing snow, frequently reducing visibility to less than 1/4 mile for three hours or more.	• Avoid going outside if possible. • Dress appropriately, wear layers, and stay dry. • Prepare for power outages and protect pipes from freezing. • Consider working remotely or altering work hours. • Campus will consider the need for reduced operations.
Thunderstorm 	Thunderstorm Warning	Severe weather has been reported by spotters or indicated by radar. Warnings indicate imminent danger to life and property. Warnings typically encompass a much smaller area.	• Seek shelter inside of a building or vehicle if possible. • If caught in a severe thunderstorm while driving, pull over to a safe location until the storm has passed. • Delay or cancel all outdoor activities. • Follow SAFE-U notifications sent by University.
	Lightning Strikes	Lighting and/or thunder are observed.	• If lightning or thunder is observed, or a thunderstorm appears imminent (within 15 miles), go indoors if possible. • No work in aerial lifts or similar equipment. • Stay away from water and/or metal structures. Stay inside of vehicles. • All outdoor activities, including student activities and field work, should be suspended until 20 minutes after the last strike of lightning is seen and after the last sound of thunder is heard.
High Winds 	High Wind Warning	Sustained, strong winds with even stronger gusts (40 mph) are happening.	• When wind speeds are between 25-40 mph, for outdoor events secure tents, equipment, and other objects. • Take temporary shelter when gusts exceed 40 mph until the alert is cleared. • No work in aerial lifts or similar equipment for wind speeds above 28 mph.
Tornado 	Tornado Watch	Tornadoes are possible in and near the watch area. Make plans.	• Review and discuss your emergency plans, take inventory of your supplies and check your designated shelter. • Be ready to act quickly if a warning is issued or you suspect a tornado is approaching.
	Tornado Warning	A tornado has been sighted or indicated by weather radar. There is imminent danger to life and property. Take action.	• Go to designated shelter. The safest places are windowless interior rooms such as hallways, bathrooms, or conference rooms on the lowest floor possible.

Alert Type:		Definition:	Recommended Actions:
			- If in a vehicle or outdoors, move to the closest substantial shelter and protect yourself from flying debris. - Follow SAFE-U notifications sent by University.
Floods 	Flood Advisory	A specific weather event that is forecast to occur may become a nuisance. If caution is not exercised, it could lead to situations that may threaten life and property.	- Consider suspending activities and prepare for an evacuation. - Learn which roadways are likely to flood and find an alternative route.
	Flood Warning	Flooding is imminent or occurring.	- Cancel events and move everyone to high ground. - Avoid floodwaters - never drive or walk through a flooded area.
Air Quality 	Good (0-50)	Air quality is satisfactory, and air pollution poses little or no risk.	No recommended changes to University operations.
	Moderate (51-100)	Air quality is acceptable. However, there may be a risk for some people, particularly those who are unusually sensitive to air pollution.	No recommended changes to University operations.
	Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups (101-150)	Members of sensitive groups may experience health effects. The general public is less likely to be affected.	Sensitive groups should take necessary precautions - personal decision
	Unhealthy (151-200)	Some members of the general public may experience health effects; members of sensitive groups may experience more serious health effects.	- Limit outdoor work and prolonged heavy exertion if possible. Consider reassigning employees who work outdoors for more than one hour or provide an N95 respirator for voluntary use. - Consider canceling or moving outdoor classes indoors. - Shorten/modify outdoor recreational activity to limit prolonged or heavy exertion. - Consider cancellation of more intense outdoor athletic activities or move indoors.
	Very Unhealthy (201-300)	Health alert: The risk of health effects is increased for everyone.	- Limit outdoor work. If outdoor work is absolutely necessary, provide N95 respirators for voluntary use. - Cancel or move all outdoor classes indoors. - Cancel or move all outdoor athletic/recreational activities indoors.
	Hazardous (301-500)	Health warning of emergency conditions: everyone is more likely to be affected.	- Suspend outdoor work. If outdoor work is absolutely necessary, provide N95 respirators for use. - Cancel or move all outdoor classes indoors. - Cancel or move all outdoor athletic/recreational activities indoors. - Reduce campus operations to the extent possible.