

Weather Monitoring and Severe Weather Response Guidelines (3/10)

Use this document when requesting UTIA public event weather monitoring services and implementing a response to severe weather.

I. PROCEDURES FOR REQUESTING WEATHER MONITORING ALERT SERVICES FOR ANY UTIA PUBLIC EVENT

1. Email Tiffany Morrison, UTIA Safety Coordinator and *weather monitoring account manager* at tiffany@utk.edu, with the following information no later than 7 business days prior to the event:
 - a. Time and Date of the event
 - b. Exact address of the location of the event, including zip code
 - c. The names, phone numbers and email address of TWO on-site contacts who will be managing the event.

*These contacts **MUST** have a cell phone that can receive text messages and/or emails, for example a cell phone with text messaging service or something more sophisticated like a Blackberry or other brand of "smart phone." The weather monitoring service **does not** offer voice alerts at this time.*
 - d. Preferred hours of weather alerting.

What this means is that persons receiving the weather alerts may designate "quiet hours" for when they do not want to receive alerts. For example, someone may choose to receive alerts beginning two days before an event and ending at the end of the day of the event during the hours of 8AM-10PM; or they can choose to be alerted around the clock. Alerts will only be sent in the event of lightning or severe weather. This information should be given to the Safety Coordinator at the time of arranging for weather monitoring services.
2. After the request is emailed to the Safety Coordinator she may request any missing information that was not initially received. Once all the necessary information has been received, the Safety Coordinator will send a confirmation email that the account settings of the weather monitoring alert system have been modified to meet the specifications given. If the event coordinators have additional questions they should call the Safety Coordinator directly. She can be reached at 865-974-7144 or 865-243-5251. If she does not answer, please leave her a voicemail and she will return your call ASAP.

3. During the designated alerting parameters, on-site event organizers will receive a text message or email alerting them of approaching lightening and/or other severe weather. Organizers will then notify event attendees and staff according to the **SEVERE WEATHER PLANNING & RESPONSE GUIDELINES**. (see below)
4. As back-up, the Safety Coordinator will also receive weather alerts. If an alert is received, she will contact the event organizers at that time to confirm that they have also received the alerts.

NOTE: The weather monitoring alert system is *only* available for **UTIA public events**.

II. SEVERE WEATHER PLANNING & RESPONSE GUIDELINES

When severe weather is predicted, event organizers must respond to minimize the danger to spectators, personnel, livestock, and facilities.

1. **Advanced warning of the hazard.** Send the UTIA Safety Coordinator a Weather Monitor Alert Request (see above directions).
2. If dangerous weather conditions such as lightning, microburst, tornado, or flooding develop, notify event attendees. Notify people via radio, siren (bull horn) or other means.

Suggested wording - “The National Weather Service has detected <X conditions>... This event is <suspended or cancelled> until the hazard abates <estimate time if that is feasible>. Please follow the National Weather Service recommendations which are <...x....>”
3. **Lightening response:** Move to shelter in one of the following areas
 - a. A large permanent building or enclosed vehicle (not a Gator-like vehicle) is the best location, if accessible.
 - b. A low-lying area, but away from solitary trees, poles, fences, etc., and in an area not likely to experience flash floods.
 - c. If unable to reach cover before the storm arrives, kneel on the ground to present the lowest profile possible. *Do not* lie flat on the ground.
 - d. **Unsafe** places are near metal or water; under trees; under tents; on hills; near electrical/electronic equipment.

4. Tornado and microburst response:

- a. A **tornado watch** will be issued by the National Weather Service when weather conditions are favorable for the development of a tornado. When a tornado watch is issued, notify attendees and suspend or cancel event.
- b. A **tornado warning** is issued when a tornado has been reported in the area or has been indicated on radar.
- c. When a tornado warning is issued, immediately seek shelter in one of the following areas:
 1. The interior of a sturdy building, on the lowest level possible; stay away from windows and doors; kneel on the floor next to a supporting wall and cover your head.
 2. A ditch or culvert which will not experience flash flooding.
 3. **DO NOT ATTEMPT TO OUTFRAN A TORNADO IN A VEHICLE.** Abandon the car and seek shelter immediately.

5. Reassess the hazard.

- a. It's usually safe after no thunder and no lightning have been observed for thirty minutes. Be conservative.

6. Inform people to resume activities.

For additional information, please contact Tiffany Morrison, UTIA Safety Coordinator at 865-974-7144 or 865-243-5251.