

WEATHER EMERGENCIES

Campus Community Responsibilities

- 1) Refer to the College's Weather Emergency Plan, which includes a Hurricane Plan, online at www.cofc.edu/emergency for procedures
- 2) Keep contact information up-to-date and monitor [your telephone, voice mail, internet address, text address] for emergency messages sent to those locations
- 3) Call the Emergency Information Hotline at 843.725.7246 [725-RAIN]

For updates, monitor local television and radio stations for announcements

- 4) Continue to check the Emergency Website at www.cofc.edu/emergency throughout the event and for after-incident actions

Hurricanes and Tropical Storms

College of Charleston coordinates responses to severe weather incidents such as hurricanes and tropical storms, because these incidents pose genuine risks to the health, safety and well-being of the College community. Depending on incident complexity and severity, hurricanes may be Level 2, Level 3 or Level 4 emergencies, as defined in The College's Emergency Management Plan. Every reasonable effort will be made for decisions to cancel classes, close the campus or evacuate the campus to be announced no later than 4:00 PM on the day prior to such action(s) being taken. See also Title 8, Chapter 11, Section 57 of the South Carolina Code of Laws: *Declaration of state of emergency order to close state offices due to hazardous weather.*

Definitions:

Hurricane Season: June 1 through November 30

Tropical Storm: A storm with sustained wind speeds of 34 - 73 mph

Hurricane: A storm in which sustained winds of ≥ 74 mph exist.

Categories of Hurricanes:

- Category 1 - Minimal winds 74 - 95 mph
- Category 2 - Moderate winds 96 - 110 mph
- Category 3 - Extensive winds 111 - 130 mph
- Category 4 - Extreme winds 131 - 155 mph
- Category 5 - Catastrophic winds > 155 mph

A separate "*Hurricane and Tropical Storm Preparedness Plan*" APPENDIX B has been developed to work in conjunction with the College's Emergency Management Plan. All individual department plans must be developed to work in conjunction with the hurricane plan and the Emergency Management Plan. Individual unit plans have further details about actions and responsibilities.

When a tropical storm or hurricane is approaching:

- The Emergency Management Team and Executive Policy Group will meet to aid preparations and make key decisions.
- Physical Plant and other responsible units will work to secure the campus and be prepared for post-storm cleanup
- Marketing & Communication will put their emergency communication plan into action. Heightened education will include personal advice as well as work-related instructions
- All campus units will implement their Business Continuity Plan to enable continued functioning and to minimize their downtime after a storm
- Student Affairs will implement evacuation or shelter-in-place for residential students
- EPG will determine whether there is a campus closure or an evacuation and when it will occur
- IT will lead educate campus personnel on securing computers and files, and will secure their own computers and data files
- All units which will provide services during and/or after the storm (e.g. Student Health, ARAMARK) will insure preparedness
- All units will use their own Emergency Plan and the campus Hurricane and Tropical Storm Preparedness Plan to get ready for the storm

See Appendix B for further details.

The advance preparation timeline provided in the appendix is for guidance only, and may be adjusted as appropriate

Tornados and Thunderstorms

Tornados are violent, local storms with whirling winds that can reach 200-400 MPH. Tornados are often spun off from hurricanes and tropical storms. Thunderstorms can also be severe.

- The widths of tornado paths generally range from 200 yards to one mile
- The southeast region has been known to experience tornadoes either in single storms or associated with tropical storms and hurricanes
- A **tornado watch** means that tornadoes could develop in the designated area
- A **tornado warning** means that a tornado has actually been sighted in the area or is indicated by radar
- A **severe thunderstorm watch** indicates the possibility of thunderstorms, frequent lightning and/or damaging winds, hail and heavy rain
- A **severe thunderstorm warning** means that a severe thunderstorm has actually been sighted in the area or is indicated by radar
- Tornados are categorized from F0 (least severe) to F5 (most severe) on the Fujita scale

Community members must pay attention to weather conditions, listen to radio and television for weather alert information and seek shelter before severe weather arrives. If warnings are issued, or if threatening weather approaches, do the following:

- Move to the nearest point of shelter.
- If underground shelters are not available, move to interior rooms or hallways on the lowest floors and get under sturdy pieces of furniture
- Stay away from windows
- Get out of automobiles; Do not try to outrun a tornado in a vehicle.

Winter Storms

Severe winter storms can paralyze an entire region, bringing heavy snow, ice, strong winds, extreme cold temperatures and freezing rain. Windblown objects, downed electrical wires, fallen trees and branches, and frostbite and hypothermia are possible. Ice and snow storms can cause slippery roads and poor visibility making driving conditions hazardous. Winter storms can prevent employees and students from reaching the facility, leading to a temporary shutdown until roads are cleared. Heavy snow and ice can also cause structural damage and power outages. The weight of ice or heavy snow can down power lines and cause roofs to collapse.

Winter Weather Advisory: Cold, ice and snow are expected to cause significant inconvenience and may be hazardous but probably not life threatening

Winter Storm Warning: Severe winter weather is imminent or very likely within 12 hours

Winter Storm Watch: At least four inches of snow in 12 hours, or six inches in 24 hours or significant ice accumulations are possible within 24 to 48 hours

PERSONNEL RESPONSIBILITIES FOR WEATHER EMERGENCIES

(Also, see Appendix B – Hurricane and Tropical Storm Preparedness Plan)

Public Safety	<p>Operational Readiness:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Receive information from National Weather Service ● Notify Executive Vice President for External Relations, or Senior Director of Media Relations ● Initiate notifications and announcements to the College community ● Notify personnel ● Review traffic plans ● Conduct operational readiness inspections of vehicles, barricades, traffic cones, barrier tape, equipment and supplies <p>Weather Emergency Recovery Efforts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Evaluate potential hazards and the need for emergency personnel ● Dispatch police, fire and rescue units as required and assist in rescue efforts ● Provide security for closed buildings ● Check buildings for injured and trapped people ● Barricade damaged areas to keep people out ● Assist with the photo documentation of damages ● Ensure that fire watches are posted as necessary ● Provide traffic control to limit movement into affected areas ● Notify owners of damaged automobiles with direction on actions to take.
Physical Plant	<p>Operational Readiness:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Protect equipment from freeze-up during winter storms by covering or bringing inside ● Ensure all roof drains, gutters and scuppers are checked and cleaned as necessary ● Ensure roofs are cleared of debris (chairs, bottles, trash, etc.) ● Conduct operational readiness inspections of vehicles, emergency generators, portable pumps and sump pumps ● Ensure sufficient inventory of critical supplies, including sand, tarpaulins and custodial equipment and supplies ● Ensure fuel storage reserves are maximized ● Prepare for possible power outages and water shortages ● Prevent drafts and water intrusion by ensuring all windows are closed and tightly secured ● Implement the Physical Plant weather plan as necessary.

<p>Physical Plant</p> <p><i>Continued</i></p>	<p>Weather Emergency Recovery Efforts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey damages; look for broken and leaking gas lines, live wires, flooded electrical circuits, submerged electrical appliances, flammable liquids, structural damage, etc. • Shut off utilities to affected buildings as necessary • Repair electrical, plumbing, heating, ventilation systems, mechanical, and structural components or notify appropriate contractors to make repairs • Provide equipment, supplies and staff to prevent further damage • Obtain any needed assistance from utility companies • Rope off dangerous areas if unable to clean up immediately • Provide debris removal • Monitor on-line boilers • Begin salvage operations as soon as possible • Assist in rescue efforts • Clean up flooded or dangerous areas • Cover broken windows or torn roof coverings • Clean roof drains and move debris from roofs
<p>Environmental Health and Safety & Director of Fire & EMS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Act as a resource on issues of safety, environment, chemical, fire, radiological and public health • Assist with the photo documentation of damages • Assess chemical, radiological, biological and asbestos releases and take appropriate actions
<p>Business and Auxiliary Services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage Insurance Issues including (but not limited to) seeing that policies are in place, pre-storm conditions are documented, forms and paperwork are properly completed, and claims are filed,
<p>Student Affairs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage sheltering of resident students or, if necessary, the evacuation of resident students [details are in Residence Life emergency plan] • Provide counseling services for students if the nature of the incident warrants • Provide medical services for students through Student Health if appropriate
<p>Office of Media Relations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate directions to all personnel, including students, regarding actions to take prior to the weather event and during the recovery period
<p>Information Technology</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage computer physical infrastructure and electronic data/information preservation in preparation for, emergency access during (as appropriate), and recovery from weather emergency [Details are in IT emergency plan]
<p>All offices (Divisions, Schools, Departments, Services, etc.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow business continuity plan of the unit to maintain normal function to the extent possible and formulate specific plans depending on instructions from the EPG and EMT and the nature of the situation.