



Bad Weather Contingency Plan Considerations

If there is a threat of severe weather...

- Monitor the weather closely using phone announcements, weather radio alerts, or other reports.
- Work with Administration to make a decision about meal service during bad weather or threat of a storm.
- Develop site specific contingency plans for bad weather.
- Determine what protective weather gear is needed if a decision is made to continue meal service.
- Determine how to communicate temporary unavailability of meal services due to bad weather if a decision is made to discontinue meal service.
- Learn about the tornado warning system for your county or locality. Know how to distinguish between the siren's warnings for a tornado *watch* and a tornado *warning*.

Signs of an approaching storm include...

- Dark or green-colored sky
- Large, dark, low-lying clouds
- Hail
- Loud roar that sounds like a freight train

Thunderstorms can cause disruption with lightning, hail, high winds, and/or flash flooding. Because tornadoes often accompany thunderstorms, pay close attention to changing weather conditions when there is a severe thunderstorm watch or warning. Some tornadoes strike rapidly, without time for a tornado warning, and sometimes without a thunderstorm in the vicinity.

Severe Thunderstorm Watch

- A severe thunderstorm watch is issued when severe thunderstorms are possible in the area.

Severe Thunderstorm Warning

- A severe thunderstorm warning is issued when severe thunderstorms are occurring or imminent in the warning area.

Tornado Watch

- A tornado watch is issued when weather conditions favor the formation of tornadoes, for example, during a severe thunderstorm. When a tornado watch is announced, people should be prepared to take shelter if conditions worsen.

Tornado Warning

- A tornado warning is issued when a tornado funnel is sighted or indicated by weather radar. When a tornado warning is issued, people must take shelter immediately!

**In the event of a storm threat...**

- Develop a system for monitoring the weather.
- Develop a system for knowing who is working at a particular time, and be ready to account for everybody.
- Identify and communicate indoor and outdoor shelter locations in advance with program staff and volunteers. Safe areas should be close to walls or support columns at the center or back of a building, and away from glass walls, glass entryways and windows.
- Ensure that all workers know what to do and where to go. This includes personnel who are working in the kitchens, those distributing meals outside, and those delivering meals on bus routes.

In the event of a worsening storm...

- Communicate threat to program staff, volunteers, and customers (if applicable).
- Protect cash, meal recording documents, and food if it does not threaten anyone's safety.
- Discontinue services.
- Avoid contact with electrical equipment, cords, or corded phones.
- Avoid contact with plumbed water, which can conduct electricity (washing dishes)
- If indoors, take shelter in a designated safe place where there are no windows, skylights, or glass doors, which could be broken and cause damage or injury.
- If outdoors, seek shelter in a sturdy building within walking distance, low area such as a ravine, or under a thick growth of small trees. Squat low to the ground on the balls of the feet, place hands over ears and head between the knees. Do not lie flat on the ground.
- If outdoors, avoid natural lightning conduits, such as tall trees and open metal vehicles.

If the Power Goes Out

- Keep the **refrigerator and freezer doors closed** as much as possible to maintain the cold temperature.
 - The **refrigerator** will keep food **cold for about 4 hours** if unopened.
 - A **full freezer** will keep the temperature for approximately **48 hours** (24 hours if it is half full) if the door remains closed.
- Once power is restored, check the temperature inside your refrigerator and freezer. You can safely eat or refreeze food in the freezer if it is 41°F or below.
- Discard any potentially hazardous food in cold storage held above 41°F for 2 hours or more.



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