

Severe weather guidelines for Wake Forest

April 3rd, 2014

Wake Forest University is committed to the safety of its students, faculty, staff and visitors. In the event of inclement weather events, such as a severe thunderstorm, tornado watch or warning, it is important that all occupants of campus adhere to the warnings and information provided in the severe weather alerts from the National Weather Service. The information and tips below will be helpful in the event of a weather emergency.

The following guidelines are to provide quick action for safety during a **severe weather event such as a tornado**:

- Turn off electrical equipment and stop machinery.
- If in a laboratory setting, turn off lab equipment, close chemical containers, and proceed with Laboratory Safe Shutdown and Start-up Procedures.
- If standing on elevated surfaces, such as ladders and scaffolding, come down to the floor or ground.
- If outdoors, seek safe shelter indoors. A sturdy building is the safest shelter.
- Avoid seeking shelter in buildings with high open spaces such as a gymnasium, an atrium or a large glassed area.
- Move to the lowest level of the building or an interior corridor or stairwell. Avoid upper floors and stay away from windows and doors.
- If seeking shelter in a corridor, face the interior wall. Kneel and place hands over head.
- If there is not enough time to move to an interior location of the building, take shelter under a desk or sturdy table.
- If there is not enough time to take shelter indoors, lie flat and face down on the ground, protecting the back of your head with your arms. Get as far away from trees and cars as you can; they may blow onto you in a tornado.
- Supervisors must contact the employees and advise them to cease outdoor activities until the immediate threat is over; however, employees do not need to wait for a supervisor's instruction to take shelter. If an employee feels at any time that weather conditions are unsafe, they should stop working and seek shelter.
- Remaining in a vehicle is extremely risky in a tornado. If possible, drivers are to stop their vehicles and seek shelter inside the closest building. However, if there is no building nearby, and you can safely get noticeably



lower than the level of the roadway, leave your vehicle and lie in that area, covering your head with your hands. Avoid seeking shelter under bridges, because they offer little protection against flying debris. If you are caught in extreme winds or flying debris and are unable to seek shelter indoors or exit to a low-lying area, park the car as quickly and safely as possible, out of the traffic lanes. Stay in the car with the seat belt on. Put your head down below the windows; cover your head with your hands and a blanket, coat or other cushion if possible.

- Please do not go outside again until the immediate threat is gone.
- Everyone is encouraged to follow directions provided in emergency messages communicated by University Police, Communications and External Relations, or other official University sources. The University's emergency notification system is called Wake Alert (wakealert.wfu.edu). It provides numerous ways for University Police and Communications and External Relations to announce emergencies.
- Call Customer Service at 758-4255 if repair is needed to any building damage.
- Call University Police at 758-5911 for emergency needs such as fire and/or injuries needing any 911 related services.

The following guidelines should be considered when there is an **immediate threat of a severe thunderstorm and lightning**:

- Seek safe shelter indoors.
- Turn off electrical equipment such as televisions or computers using AC/DC connection.
- Close all open windows.
- Stay away from windows and doors during a severe lightning storm.
- Remain indoors until the severe weather event has passed.

Keeping those outside (including employees and students) safe: Lightning poses a particular threat. It is important for departments to monitor weather conditions in the surrounding area. In case of neighboring lightning storms, safe shelter is recommended within substantial buildings, enclosed metal vehicles or low ground. Outside stairwells do not offer protection during severe weather. Please wait inside at least 30 minutes after the last lightning strike before returning outside.

Follow @WakeAlert for severe weather updates.