



City of Appleton – Parks and Recreation Severe Weather Policy (Updated 9/20/2023)

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of the severe weather policy is to establish procedures on how to handle severe weather situations in order to protect participants, spectators, and staff who are involved in a department organized recreational activity or who are utilizing a department operated facility.

***Please note: Appleton Parks and Recreation programs that take place in Appleton Area School District (AASD) facilities will be canceled when the AASD cancels school or after school activities due to weather conditions.*

II. WINTER WEATHER CONDITIONS

When the following weather conditions exist, Appleton Parks and Recreation **may** (at their discretion) cancel, postpone, or reschedule any indoor or outdoor department organized recreational activity.

A. Cold Weather

1. Combination of wind and/or temperature that is 25 degrees below zero or colder
(This information can be obtained from local weather channels, radio, or weather related internet Sites)

B. Icy or Sleety Weather Conditions

1. When the National Weather Service has issued travel warnings

C. Blizzard or Other Snow Fall Conditions

1. When the National Weather Service has issued local travel warnings
2. When visibility for road travel is severely limited

III. SUMMER WEATHER CONDITIONS

When the following weather conditions exist, Appleton Parks and Recreation **may** (at their discretion) cancel, postpone, or reschedule any indoor or outdoor department organized recreational activity.

A. Extreme Heat / Humidity

1. When the National Weather Service has issued extreme heat / humidity warning. A warning will be issued if there is a heat index of at least 105°F but less than 115°F for a period of 3 hours or more per day or if nighttime low temperatures are above 80°F for 2 consecutive days

B. Lightning / Severe Thunderstorms

1. When the National Weather Service has issued a severe thunderstorm warning for our area

C. Tornadoes

1. When the National Weather Service has issued a tornado warning for our area

IV. SEVERE WEATHER GUIDELINES DURING SUMMER RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES

In the event that severe summer weather conditions occur unexpectedly or are present during a department organized recreational activity, Parks and Recreation employees shall adhere to the following procedures:

A. Extreme Heat / Humidity

1. Mandatory water breaks in a shaded area every 25 minutes for a minimum duration of 5 minutes
2. Watch/monitor participants constantly to ensure participant health

B. Lightning / Severe Thunderstorm

1. Stay low, keeping away from trees, tall objects, fences, metal objects and water
2. If possible, find shelter in a permanent enclosed sturdy building. If you are with a group, spread out rather than staying close together
3. If your hair starts to stand on end or your skin begins to tingle, lightning is about to strike. Bend forward, placing your hands on your knees, and crouch down to make yourself the smallest possible target. Do not lie flat on the ground

C. Tornado

1. If outdoors, try to find the nearest permanent enclosed sturdy building to take cover in
2. Stay as far away from windows as possible and do not open them under any circumstances
3. Get into a crouched position on the floor covering your head with your hands
4. If there are not any buildings to take cover in, find a nearby ditch or depression in the earth and lie flat in it, covering your head with your hands

V. AIR QUALITY GUIDELINES

Appleton Parks and Recreation staff monitor the air quality index (AQI) on an ongoing basis using DEQ AirNow, and will make the following modifications to outdoor programs that cannot be relocated indoors:

- AQI 100-150: Outdoor activities may be modified including decreased intensity and duration with more frequent breaks.
- AQI 151-200: Outdoor activities will be modified if they cannot be moved indoors.
 - **Short Programs (less than 75-minutes):** will be limited to light activities and increased rest periods if they cannot be relocated indoors.
 - **Half day and full-day programs:** may be moved indoors or postponed/cancelled if no indoor location is available. If relocated indoors, outdoor time will be limited to a total of one hour with light activities and increased rest periods.
 - **Drop-in activities:** Adult and all ages self-directed activities such as lap swim, open swim, and special events will continue if staff is able to safely work.
- AQI 200 or more: Outdoor activities may be cancelled, and outdoor recreation facilities may close.
- If you or your child are sensitive to air pollution or smoke or have asthma, let us know so we can help modify the activity, and when in doubt do not participate.

Air quality conditions can change rapidly, and we will do our best keep you informed of program status. We will normally notify you via email 1-2 hours prior to the start of the activity if it is delayed or cancelled due to air quality. We will also post delays and cancellations on our social media sites. In the event that an activity already in progress is canceled due to poor air quality, we will contact you to pick up your child within 1 hour.

VI. NOTIFICATION PROCEDURES

In the event of a severe weather situation, the decision to cancel, postpone, or reschedule an event shall be made by the Recreation Manager, Recreation Supervisor, or designee. Once the decision has been made, employees shall adhere to the following notification procedures:

A. Update Parks and Recreation Information Line

1. Work with the Customer Service Staff during regular business hours, Monday – Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. to update the department information line (832-3900). If a cancellation occurs over the weekend, either the Recreation Supervisors or Recreation Manager will be responsible for updating the line.

B. Post Cancellations / Postponements on Department Website

1. www.appletonparkandrec.org should be updated during regular business hours to inform participants of any cancellations.

C. Post cancellations / postponements on Department Facebook page

1. Our department Facebook page should be updated during regular business hours and over the weekend when cancellations occur. The Recreation Manager should be notified of any cancellations so that our Facebook page can be updated appropriately.

D. Email Participants

1. If time allows, an email should be sent to all participants notifying them of any cancellations. If the cancellation occurs within 1-3 hours of the program start time, every effort should be made to place phone calls to notify participants of the cancellation.

VII. SUPERVISOR RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. Provide proper notification and training of “Severe Weather Policy” to all subordinate employees.
- B. Insure all employees under his/her supervision adhere to policy.
- C. Notify participants (when applicable) of any make-up classes or games within two days of program cancellation.

VIII. STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. Advise the public to facility closings and program adjustments due to severe weather conditions.
- B. Follow the severe weather policy procedures.
- C. Contact direct supervisor for additional training if needed.