

Weather Prepared Checklist: School – Preschool/Middle School/High School

I. Getting Started: Build Your Team

- Organize a dedicated Weather Watch Team that will:
 - Monitor for developing weather threats (some times days in advance) and communicate potential hazards with personnel.
 - Disseminate important weather information through the school.
 - Ensure weather response plans you will develop are activated when triggered.
 - Designate at least two individuals who will be responsible for maintaining 'Weather Prepared' status & documentation.
 - Review: "[Being Weather Ready](#)"
 - Review: "[Be a Force of Nature](#)" from the Weather Ready Nation (WRN) website.
 - Watch: [Introduction to the NWS Baltimore/Washington Office](#) – 4 minute video

II. Develop Plans for Weather Threats

- Develop emergency plans for various weather threats that can impact our area (from the lesser more frequent threats, to the rare but catastrophic threats). Use [this page](#) to help build your plans.
 - Plans should all include **Triggers** & **Procedures**:
 - **Triggers** to activate your plans
 - Triggers can be:
 - NWS Watch, Warnings, or Advisories
 - Thresholds
 - Ex.) 6" of snow or 50 mph wind gusts
 - If used, include if this is a forecast or observed threshold
 - Other
 - Each plan may have more than one threshold/trigger to activate different levels of severity of response.
 - Create a "quick list" of your activation thresholds/triggers for ready access.
 - **Procedures** for effective staff response.
 - Define low, medium, high, and extreme impacts from the different types of dangerous weather and list the agency response to each.
 - *Examples:*
 - *Define what an extreme impact is on your agency due to a winter storm and what is the preparedness and response?*
 - *A damaging tornado is set to make a direct impact on your facility within 15 minutes, what is the response?*
 - *5 inches of rainfall has fallen in 2 hours causing flash flooding. Your facility is in the direct path of rising waters. What is the response?*
 - Include evacuation plans where needed
 - How response could be impacted if resources are lost for several days?

- ❑ Make your response and preparation plans available to staff. Share plans with your city/county Emergency Manager in your local government or Board of Education.
- ❑ Perform a mock training exercise simulating a worst case weather scenario for a large organization. Involve staff & students.

III. Weather Observation and Warning Reception

- ❑ Have continuous weather monitoring capability when facilities are staffed.
- ❑ Have multiple ways of receiving weather forecasts and warnings which can include any of the following:
 - Operational [NOAA Weather Radio](#) in a staffed location.
 - Register for [iNWS text/email alerts](#). iNWS allows you to instantly receive selected NWS warnings for your location via smart phone and/or email, and can potentially trigger plans you create:
 - Email address you register with in iNWS can either be an individual's email, or a “group” email that you set up on your end that receives the email and then redistributes the alert email to a network of multiple individual email accounts.
 - Bookmarked list of weather Internet sites which should include www.weather.gov/washington.
 - Multiple ways to access the internet in the event of power loss.
 - Air card LTE, wireless device, satellite, backup location, battery backup for NOAA Weather Radio.
 - Text alerting system and or email distribution lists (such as from your city or county) to receive NWS Weather Watches and Warnings.
 - Smart Phone Applications.
 - Battery powered AM / FM radio.
- ❑ Sign up through NWS Sterling ([email here](#)) to receive:
 - “Heads-Up” emails for potential hazardous weather that arises
 - Monday 9AM Webinar – Weather impacts in the week ahead
- ❑ Develop a procedure to ensure a daily weather check is done.
 - Monitor the [NWS Sterling Emergency Manager Webpage](#)
 - Review the [Hazardous Weather Outlook](#) which will describe any area weather threats foreseen over the next 7 days.

IV. Communication Abilities for Dissemination of Weather Warnings

- ❑ Demonstrate multiple ways of communicating / disseminating important weather information through the school which can include any of the following:
 - Public announcement (PA)
 - Text alerting system
 - Sirens
 - Message scrolling
 - Phone calls / phone tree and/or person-to-person (runner)
 - Email lists
- ❑ Define the flow of weather threat information from the Weather Watch Team throughout the school from Weather Team to students.

- Develop a procedure to ensure any potential for dangerous weather is shared with your staff.

V. **Maintaining Weather Prepared Status**

- Weather Watch Team should perform the following annually:
 - Review your Weather Prepared documentation and training materials to ensure preparedness for hazardous weather throughout the organization.
 - Ensure all new staff is trained in hazardous weather threats and plans.
 - Review all weather threat plans, and update as needed.
 - Update your list & bookmarks of weather web sites.
 - Develop and test a mock Tornado Drill with faculty and students testing procedures for an imminent Tornado impact.
 - Update all contact lists, phone number and email lists.

VI. **Emergency Manager**

- Reach out to your city or county emergency manager to maintain awareness of your organizational response, preparation and communication plan.
- Encourage the emergency manager to be involved in your table top exercises.

VII. **Weather Ready Nation Ambassador (optional)**

- If you would like to be recognized for your efforts in spreading National Weather Service messages for weather readiness you can apply to be a **Weather Ready Nation Ambassador** to help us spread weather readiness & help build a truly weather ready nation. ([click here](#))