



## Safety Guideline

### SEVERE WEATHER SAFETY

Whenever a Severe Thunderstorm Warning, Tornado Watch, or Tornado Warning is issued for the Omaha area. We all need to know what to do and take actions to protect ourselves and others. Campus Security will send out the alert for Watch using the overhead pages and the computer crawlers. For Tornado Warning they will use the overhead page, computer crawler and they will send a text alert using the UNMC Alerts/E2 Campus system to all who have signed up the alerts. Employees are expected to participate in drills and review their specific department plans periodically. Additional information can be found in the [Emergency Preparedness Guides](#).

#### 1. Definitions

- A. **Civil Defense Warning Siren:** A series of sirens activated by the Emergency Operations Center in the City-County Building to alert the public that an emergency condition exists in the area. Upon activation of the sirens the public should listen to local TV or radio stations for information on the type of emergency and instructions.
- B. **Severe Thunderstorm Warning:** Issued by the National Weather Service when storms with strong winds, rain, and hail are expected in the area. A Severe Thunderstorm Warning may last for a few hours.
- C. **Tornado Watch:** Issued when weather conditions exist that could produce a tornado. A Tornado Watch may last for several hours.
- D. **Tornado Warning:** Issued when a tornado has actually been sighted and is in a position to threaten the community. At this time, the civil defense warning sirens are sounded, and the emergency messages are flashed on the radio and the television networks. A Tornado Warning usually lasts for thirty minutes or less.
- E. The outdoor warning sirens will be activated when straight-line winds in excess of 80 mph are expected.
- F. **Essential Activity Condition:** Initiated to maintain essential activities during the period of severe weather, natural or other disasters. Refer to UNMC Policies and Procedures No. 1017, Essential Activity Condition, for more specific information.

#### 2. Severe Thunderstorm Warning, Tornado Watch or Tornado Warning

- A. Individuals who receive the weather statement call for their specific department must notify the manager on duty and contact those designated by the unit specific policy.
- B. Employees must be prepared to move all individuals to a severe weather safe area and move unsecured equipment and hazardous chemicals to a safe area (if time allows) in the event a tornado warning is issued.
- C. A damage assessment team will be formed by Facilities Management to assess all damage from the tornado and determine priority of repair work needed.
- D. If there is damage on campus, the manager/ supervisor on duty should report damage Facilities Management by phone (ext. 9-4050) if possible. If the phones are not working damage reports are to be given to Security Dispatch located in University Tower room 2301.
- E. Depending upon the extent of damage and number of injuries it may be necessary to activate Incident Command.

Departments may have more specific information on what action to take during severe weather. Be sure to familiarize yourself with the department procedures. Sign up for the campus emergency alert system and know where the designated severe weather safe area are located in your building. These may be designated on the building evacuation plans. Additional information can also be found in the Emergency Preparedness Guides located in your building and [online](#)

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