

Spring Storm Safety Prep

Ensuring Your School is Storm-Ready

Even schools that already have well-designed weather plans should revisit them regularly to confirm they still meet safety expectations, reflect current building conditions, and support the needs of everyone on campus. The checklist below can be used to identify areas that may require updates, clarification, or additional training.

☐ Quick Access to Shelter

- Can all students and staff reach designated shelter areas within three minutes?
- Consider walking distance, number of occupants, traffic flow, and any mobility-related needs.

☐ Adequate Shelter Capacity

- Do all identified shelter spaces comfortably hold the number of students and staff assigned to them?
- Review class schedules, group sizes, and special-needs considerations to ensure capacity works throughout the day.

☐ Structural Strength of Shelter Areas

- Have shelter rooms been reviewed for strong construction features?
- Avoid areas with potential weaknesses such as skylights or unstable ceilings.

☐ Multiple Shelter Zones

- Are shelters distributed across different parts of the building so no area is too far from protection?
- Confirm that every wing or hallway has a clearly assigned shelter location.



☐ **Reliable Alerting Methods**

- Is there a primary system (intercom, tone, bell, etc.) to announce sheltering?
- Is there a backup, such as a megaphone or air horn, in case power or communication systems fail?

☐ **Clear Shelter Signage**

- Are shelter routes and locations clearly labeled with visible signs and directional arrows?
- Can visitors, new staff, or substitutes quickly identify where to go?

☐ **Reliable Weather Monitoring**

- Does the school have dependable tools for receiving real-time weather updates and warnings?
- Ensure staff know who monitors alerts and how decisions are communicated.

☐ **Regular Practice and Review**

- Is the severe-weather plan practiced consistently through drills?
- Are lessons learned from each drill used to improve the plan?



A strong severe-weather plan is only effective when it is up-to-date, well-practiced, and clearly understood by all members of the school community. By using this checklist to review each component of your procedures, you help ensure that students, staff, and drivers are prepared to act quickly and safely when dangerous weather approaches.

Reference

US Department of Commerce, NOAA, National Weather Service. (2010). Severe Weather Preparedness Guide for Schools. Weather.gov.
<https://www.weather.gov/grb/schools>