



ANNEX F

SEVERE WEATHER EVENTS

I. PURPOSE

This annex describes how UNC will act to protect lives and property during severe weather events, and how the University will effectively utilize resources to maintain an appropriate level of operation during severe weather.

II. SITUATION

On rare occasions, UNC may be forced to curtail or suspend operations due to severe, inclement weather.

III. ASSUMPTIONS

- A. UNC will, from time to time, experience severe weather events which will impact normal operations.
- B. The most likely severe weather event will be heavy snow or blizzard conditions, but damaging winds, lightning, tornadoes and floods are also possible.
- C. UNC will typically have ample warning via the National Weather Service before experiencing severe winter storms and minimal warning prior to most other major weather events.
- D. University personnel will be notified if the weather event is determined to be an emergency or potential life-threatening emergency through the University's emergency notification system.
- E. UNC students, staff and faculty will be warned about severe weather events by way of the news media and the emergency notification system. Faculty and staff are expected to take appropriate action to minimize the risk of injury to students and

staff, as well as secure work areas from potential damage. News concerning University closure will be provided to local radio stations and Denver media outlets. Students, staff and faculty can access the UNC weather information line at 351-4100.

- F. During tornadoes and certain flood situations, the Police Communications Center will have to be evacuated. Redundant facilities will allow emergency communications to continue.

IV. CONCEPT OF OPERATION

The intent of this Annex is to protect lives and property and to effectively use available resources to maintain University operations during severe weather.

Depending on the nature, size and timing of the weather emergency, either UNC's Chief of Police or UNC's AVP for Facilities Management (or their designee) will gather information from on-duty police officers, Facilities Management personnel, local law enforcement agencies, National Weather Service bulletins and other major public and private entities when possible, regarding conditions on campus and the surrounding community. The Chief of Police or the AVP for Facilities Management will recommend to the Vice-President for Finance and Administration whether non-essential UNC services should be suspended.

If the incident occurs during the work day, the decision to close the University will be disseminated by way of the emergency notification system, the media, the UNC weather information line and other means as appropriate. If the emergency occurs while the University is closed, the Vice President for Finance and Administration will be notified of conditions and recommendations. Appropriate notifications related to the status of University operations will be made.

The University News and Public Relations Office will issue an announcement, via the news media, to inform the campus population of any disruption to normal campus operations. Announcements should be updated as needed indicating any change to the University's operating status.

Each individual is responsible for deciding if the conditions are safe for his/her travel. The University of Northern Colorado's severe weather policy is driven by the needs of the entire campus community rather than the particular needs of each individual. The University's response to a given storm will take into consideration the conditions on campus, in the City of Greeley and the immediate region.

V. CATEGORIES OF SEVERE WEATHER EMERGENCIES

A. WINTER STORMS

For severe snow storms there are assigned priorities for snow removal on campus. As conditions deteriorate, stress is placed on available resources. To maintain access for police, fire and emergency medical vehicles, high priority areas will be served first. As additional resources become available, other areas of campus will be addressed. It's possible that high winds and heavy snow will make clearing areas virtually impossible or excessively dangerous. As soon as the storm reasonably allows for snow clearing actions, priority locations will be addressed.

A list of snow removal priorities will be maintained in the office of Facilities Management.

Facilities Management will be responsible for clearing campus parking lots. Outside contractors may be utilized. Facilities Management may close or control access to parking lots to facilitate snow removal. To speed the removal of snow from lots and reopen lots more rapidly, snow may be piled inside lot boundaries and not removed entirely.

Walking and bicycling may be impaired and unsafe for certain members of the community. Conditions such as black ice, high winds, poor visibility and extremely low chill factors may be present. Emergency and essential resources may be delayed in reaching campus because of the current conditions.

Under extreme conditions where snow removal has stopped or is seriously impaired the University may be closed. The National Weather Service provides winter weather safety information at: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/om/winter/index.shtml>

B. TORNADO / HIGH WINDS

Damaging winds seldom impact the ability of the University to conduct normal operations unless they result in the interruption of utility services or block roads due to debris. Utility interruptions may impact individual buildings, parts of campus, or the entire campus. Utility interruptions due to high winds are usually beyond the scope of University personnel to mitigate. Most University resources will be directed at debris removal to restore the campus to normal function as soon as possible.

Tornadoes have a high potential to produce casualties and damage. Damage from tornadoes may require the closure of individual buildings or the entire campus until damage can be assessed and repaired. University priorities will focus on warning and recovery as little can be safely done during a tornado. University priorities will focus on warning and recovery as little can be safely done during a tornado. Tornado warnings will require occupants to shelter in place within designated tornado shelters until the all clear is given.

Upon receipt of a tornado warning by the emergency notification system or by other means, each office or person notified will begin to shelter and if possible, notify other building occupants of the warning. Persons will be directed to take cover in designated tornado shelters, usually the lowest interior portion of the building. People should be advised not to leave the building. The UNC weather information line (351-4100) can be called for updated information. Additionally a message indicating the warning has expired will be transmitted by the emergency notification system.

Individuals who are outside and receive a confirmed tornado warning through any means should enter the nearest public building and shelter in a designated area or the lowest, interior public location, away from windows and doors. The National Weather Service provides additional Tornado safety information at: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/om/severeweather/index.shtml>

C. SEVERE THUNDERSTORMS / LIGHTNING

Severe thunderstorms can produce strong, damaging winds and dangerous lightning. Utility interruptions may impact individual buildings, parts of campus, or the entire campus. Utility interruptions due to thunder storms are usually beyond the scope of University personnel to mitigate.

Individuals should remain indoors or in a vehicle until lightning and/or thunder has stopped. Individuals who are outside and see lightning or hear thunder should move indoors or into a vehicle until the lightning and thunder has passed. The National Weather Service provides additional lightning safety information at: <http://www.lightningsafety.noaa.gov/safety.shtml>

D. FLOODS

Floods may result from natural events such as rainfall or sudden snow melt, or from broken water pipes. Depending on the extent of the flooding, parts of buildings, individual buildings, parts of campus or the entire campus may be closed. University resources will be focused on minimizing the spread of water into buildings and repair/recovery efforts.

In situations where flooding has occurred, Custodial Services personnel may be required to help in removing water, as well as restoring floors and carpets to a serviceable condition.

E. WEATHER RELATED UTILITY OUTAGES

Utility outages (electrical, water, heating) may occur due to system issues on or off campus. Depending on the cause of the outage, parts of buildings, individual buildings, parts of campus or the entire campus may be closed. University resources will be focused on minimizing the scope and duration of the outage and repair/recovery efforts.

VI. RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. The Vice-President for Finance and Administration is responsible for gathering appropriate information from direct report personnel to determine the type of severe weather emergency which exists. Based on this determination, the University may open later than scheduled, close early or suspend operations for the entire day. The Vice-President for Finance and Administration is also responsible for informing the University President of the decision and communicating the decision to involved departments. The University Police Communications Center may be used to facilitate such notifications.
- B. The University Police Department will provide current information to the Vice-President for Finance and Administration on snow and other weather conditions that may impact personal safety on and near campus. This information will be gathered from University personnel and other local emergency services agencies. The Chief of Police or his designee will serve as the central point of contact between the field units and outside agencies providing updates on safety conditions and the Vice-President for Finance and Administration. If the weather emergency results in a launch of the EOC, the Incident Commander will be the central point of contact for the Vice-President of Finance and Administration.

- C. The Facilities Management Department will provide current information to the Vice-President for Finance and Administration on snow and other weather conditions that may impact the use of campus buildings, roadways and other facilities. The AVP for Facilities Management or his designee will serve as the central point of contact between the field units providing updates on property use and access and the Vice-President for Finance and Administration. If the weather emergency results in a launch of the EOC, the Incident Commander will be the central point of contact for the Vice-President of Finance and Administration.
- D. University Facilities Management will attempt to maintain the serviceability of buildings, grounds and roadways during severe weather events.
- E. Facilities Management supervisors should make hourly reports as to the status of changing weather conditions to the Communications Center. The Communications Center in coordination with the University News and Public Relations Office may update the UNC weather information line. The AVP for Facilities Management or his designee will update the Vice-President for Finance and Administration on conditions and mitigation efforts.
- F. University News and Public Relations will be responsible for notifying students, staff, faculty and the public about all severe weather events which result in reduced operations or closure of the University. See Annex B, Public Information for complete details.
- G. Deans, Directors, and Department Heads should identify specific functions and personnel who need to be present on days during severe conditions and notify those employees of their responsibilities. Special transportation arrangements may have to be considered for employees in those areas.