

1.4.6 Severe Weather and other Natural Disasters

This Policy is designed to assist Suffolk University in responding to severe weather or other natural disasters, and maintaining services when severe weather or other natural disasters occur, that may prevent employees or students from entering or leaving the University for an extended period of time.

Definitions

- A Natural Disaster is any natural event in which the University may be put in jeopardy (i.e.: major flood, blizzard, earthquake, hurricane or tornado)
 - A Watch is issued by the National Weather Service when weather conditions are favorable for the development of a certain type of hazardous weather, such as flooding, severe thunderstorms, hurricanes, or tornadoes. When a watch is issued, begin making plans and preparations for the possibility of hazardous weather. This includes monitoring the media for the latest weather information
 - A Warning is issued by the National Weather Service when the hazardous weather is actually happening or imminent. When a warning is issued, the Incident Support Team may be notified and the campus community may be notified via the Emergency Messaging System. If safe to do so, monitor the media for the latest weather information

General Responses to Severe Weather and other Natural Disasters

- Unplug all unnecessary equipment and appliances, including sensitive electrical instruments, shut down then unplug computers
- Store all important items and equipment in safe areas away from windows; keep windows, curtains and blinds closed
- When conditions warrant, move away from windows, and instruct others to do the same
- Seek appropriate shelter. The lowest possible level is usually the safest during a tornado. If unable to relocate to a lower level, put as many walls as possible between yourself and exterior building windows. Examples are interior stairwells, hallways, rooms, bathrooms or corridors
- If instructed to evacuate, follow evacuation procedures
- If safe to do so, contact your supervisor upon leaving your department
- In the event that weather or other emergency conditions warrant the all-day closing, delayed opening or early closure of the University, announcements will be made via the University's Emergency Messaging System; no school closing notifications will be made before 5:30 a.m. School closing information will also be posted on the website.
- In the event that weather or other emergency conditions warrant the all-day closing, delayed opening or early closure of the University, announcements will be made on the following radio and television stations, and websites:
 - Radio stations: WBZ 1030 AM
 - Television Stations: WBZ-TV Channel 4, WCVB-TV Channel 5, WHDH-TV Channel 7, FOX25-TV Channel 25, NECN's website
 - Other: Rhode Island Broadcasters Association (RIBA) participating members <http://www.ribroadcasters.com/images/user/file/RIBA%20Stations.pdf>
 - Websites: www.suffolk.edu
 - Please call 617-573-8262 for updated messages. Do not call the University Police Department, switchboard, administrative offices, radio, or television stations to verify University closing.

General Steps to Take After Severe Weather and other Natural Disasters Occur

- Remain calm and check for injuries
- Report injuries and damage to the Suffolk University Police Department via 8111 or 617-573-8111. If not possible to call, then notify in person if safe to do so
- Access www.suffolk.edu for updated information as it becomes available
- Leave the buildings if they have been impacted by the weather or you smell gas or chemical fumes and notify the Suffolk University Police Department via 8111 or 617-573-8111. If not possible to call, then notify in person if safe to do so
- If outdoors, watch for downed power lines and possible falling debris
- Do not enter damaged buildings. Return only when campus officials deem the building(s) to be safe
- The Suffolk University Police Department will control access to affected areas, and in conjunction with Risk Management, will make evaluations to determine if further actions are warranted
- Report all power outages and problems with phones and other utilities to the Suffolk University Police Department via 8111 or 617-573-8111. If not possible to call, then notify in person when it is safe to do so
- Do not use matches, lighters or other open flames in case of leaking natural gas

Reviewed by	Date
Incident Support Team	10/7/2015