

City of Milbank, Department of Parks and Recreation
Subject – Severe Weather Policy R2

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Purpose: To establish guidelines and procedures for how to handle extreme cold and heat/humid conditions to protect participants, spectators, and staff.

Policy Statement: In the interest of the welfare and safety of employees and park visitors, the Department of Parks and Recreation retains the right to cancel or curtail activities due to extreme weather conditions.

Extreme Winter Weather Procedures

The following are procedures for extreme cold weather conditions. All programs, special events, etc. can be canceled and facilities closed under the following conditions. Procedures under Section A apply to ALL COLD WEATHER CONDITIONS.

Section A

Cold weather – reported temperature of 25 degrees below zero without wind OR any combination of wind and temperature that is 30 degrees below zero or colder.

- All outside activities for Parks and Recreation will be canceled or postponed.
- Unity will remain open and staffed to answer the phone and to advise the public of closures and of the potential danger.

Section B

Icy or sleet weather conditions where activities/functions will be cancelled or postponed.

- When the National Weather Service, South Dakota Department of Transportation or Grant Co. Sheriff has issued travel warnings.
- When the visibility for road travel is severely limited.
- Monitor local radio for cancellations/announcements from the City Administrative Office or Parks and Recreation Manager.

Section C

Blizzard or other snow fall conditions that would significantly limit staff or participants ability to travel to the activity site, activities/special functions will be cancelled or postponed.

- When the National Weather Service, South Dakota Department of Transportation or Grant Co. Sheriff has issued travel warnings.
- When the visibility for road travel is severely limited.
- Monitor local radio for cancellations/announcements from the City Administrative Office or Parks and Recreation Manager.

Section D

Notification of participants and the public

- Post message on facility phone voice mail and at the facility's point of access.
- Call or text participants if they have a scheduled function.
- Request announcement via local radio.

Section E

Decision to close can be made by:

- Mayor or designee
- City Administrator
- Park and Recreation Manager

Section F

Staff should refer to the City of Milbank, Department of Parks and Recreation Severe Weather Policy. This may be accessed at:

- The Unity Health and Fitness web page.
- If computer access is not available, contact the Administrative office of the Parks and Recreation Department at 605-432-9236.
- In the Program Supervisors Program Manual.

Section G.

Share weather information, closings etc. with other park and recreation program sites and activity areas.

EXTREME HEAT AND HUMID WEATHER CONDITION GUIDLINES

All programs, special events, athletic games, practices, etc. can be cancelled, facilities can be closed, or work can be accommodated under the following conditions:

- When heat and humidity are such that participants in vigorous activities for prolonged periods could become over heated and continued activity become dangerous.
- When the heat index is 105 degrees and above or poses a possible threat to the safety of participants and spectators.
- When the weather conditions present a threat to the safety of participants and spectators.
- Heat index is an important consideration when assessing risk in hot and humid conditions. It is the temperature the body feels and is a measure of how humidity acts in conjunction with high temperatures to reduce the body's overall ability to cool itself. In computing the Heat Index, the chart assumes the person in the shade, at sea level and with a wind speed of 6 MPH. Exposure to direct sunlight can increase the Heat Index from 5-15 degrees.
- The daily Heat Index is based on a scale from 0-10. An index value ranging from 4-6 indicates that the conditions at a given location are typical for that time of year. Therefore, when the index values are between 0-3, conditions are cooler than average and added stress due to heat will not be a factor on those days. However, index values ranging from 7-10 are indicative of above average heat stress conditions. There may be some discomfort associated with heat stress when the index is between 7 and 9. Heat Index Stress above 9.0 indicates severe stress, and people need to take precautions if they are not acclimated to such extreme conditions.

Section H

DISRUPTION OF OUTDOOR PROGRAMS DUE TO WEATHER (LIGHTNING, ETC.)

Officials and Milbank Park & Recreation Staff should always rule on the side of safety and postpone or delay any outside activity when threatening weather exists. The City of Milbank expects home site management and officials to follow the NFHS and SDHSAA policy for suspension and resumption of play:

- When thunder is heard or lightning is seen*, the leading edge of the thunderstorm is close enough to strike your location with lightning. Suspend play for at least 30 minutes and vacate the outdoor activity to the previously designated safer location immediately.
- 30-minute rule. Once play has been suspended, wait at least 30 minutes after the last thunder is heard or lightning is witnessed* prior to resuming play.
- Any subsequent thunder or lightning* after the beginning of the 30-minute count will reset the clock and another 30-minute count should begin.
- When lightning-detection devices or mobile phone apps are available, this technology could be used to assist in deciding to suspend play if a lightning strike is noted to be within 10 miles of the event location. However, hearing thunder or seeing lightning* should always take precedence over information from a mobile app or lightning-detection device.

**At night, under certain atmospheric conditions, lightning flashes may be seen from distant storms. In these cases, it may be safe to continue an event. If no thunder can be heard and the flashes are low on the horizon, the storm may not pose a threat. Independently verified lightning detection information would help eliminate any uncertainty.*

In the event the practice or game cannot be resumed after a delay, the following options may be selected:

- Resume play from the point of interruption, at a later date.
- Declare a winner and loser based on the score at the time of interruption.

REQUIRED ITEMS AND/OR RELATED INFORMATION

<http://www.weather.gov/om/windchill/>

<http://www.nws.noaa.gov/om/heat/index.shtml>

Responsibilities

- **Park and Recreation Manager**

Insures all employees under his/her jurisdiction are aware of this policy and procedures.

- **Program Supervisors**

Advise the public to severe weather conditions. Ensures employees follow this policy and procedures. Issue's warnings or initiates disciplinary actions as needed to ensure employee compliance.

- **Employees Responsibilities**

Adhere to the policy. Follows the procedures. Asks for additional training if needed.