



# BULLETIN

## SEVERE WEATHER CONDITIONS -- OUTDOOR EVENT EVACUATION

An NFL Club evacuated its stadium successfully recently in the middle of a pre-season game due to an oncoming electrical storm. The success was due to both a good plan and good execution of the plan. The principal ingredients are applicable to outdoor event managers who too are concerned with the unexpected development of severe adverse weather conditions:

1. Establish a point-person and office on site for gathering information, making decisions, and directing/coordinating the resulting actions.
2. Maintain a functional link with the local weather station for receiving and evaluating storm warnings in the area. Prepare well for the criteria that help decisions.
3. Establish an internal communication/liaison system with others on site sharing responsibility for the sudden mass evacuation of patrons, for their (a) advance anticipation and readiness, and (b) action.
4. Have a communication relationship with officials having responsibility for special events in progress in the stadium, in the midway, etc., both for advance anticipation and for subsequent action.
5. Alert liaison principals when a dangerous storm could be on its way, and later inform them of the decision to evacuate before informing patrons. If possible, make the decision to evacuate at least 10 minutes prior to the estimated arrival of the danger.
6. Have pre-written announcements, warning patrons of what is coming and advising them how to take cover, ready for repeated use by the P.A. announcer. Preferably, the information should also be printed in programs and posted in strategic locations. By advance plans:

- \* Confirm exit gates are open before announcements are made.
- \* Encourage use of existing cover.
- \* Have city buses open, allowing anyone to enter.
- \* Enable emergency response vehicles to enter as patrons exit.
- \* Know how to reverse the process with the All-Clear.

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