

UNIVERSAL EMERGENCY RESPONSE PROCEDURE

Severe Weather Safe Area Procedures

For Assistance in Developing Safe Areas, Call:	
Fire and EMS Department	202-727-1600
Safety Unit	
EST Manager	
Other	

Situation Description

In cases of severe weather such as severe thunder storms and tornadoes, it may become necessary to relocate all building occupants to Severe Weather Safe Areas within the building to protect them from flying glass or other projectiles. The principal, or the principal’s designee, acting as the IC, will be the only person authorized to order the relocation of all building occupants to the severe weather safe areas.

Determine in advance the best shelter areas in your building. Use first floor interior hallways, restrooms, and other enclosed hall areas that are located away from large glass areas or open rooms. If hallways are not suitable, use the inside wall of a room, or rooms on the opposite side of the corridor from which the storm is approaching. Do not use end rooms. The auditorium, gymnasium, cafeteria, or other large rooms are least suitable as shelters. Free-span roofs can be blown away from this type of room, and the walls may collapse. Diagram the building to determine which areas to use and the quickest way to get there.

Procedures

Required Severe Weather Safe Area relocation procedures—

- Using the intercom, issue a general announcement informing all students and staff members that due to existing weather conditions, everyone must relocate to their predetermined Severe Weather Safe Areas until further notice.
- Activate the SERT.
- Assigned staff should check hallways, restrooms, locker rooms, storage areas, and other areas that may be occupied to ensure that everyone is relocated to the closest Severe Weather Safe Area.
- Students and staff participating in outside activities or in temporary manufactured shelters (mobile homes) used as temporary classrooms must immediately move inside the main facility to a designated Severe Weather Safe Area.
- Assist individuals needing special help relocating to safe areas.

- Do not stop for student/staff belongings. Take personal belongings only if they are at desks and will provide extra protection (e.g., large books, notebooks, or coats may be held over head and shoulders).
- Close all doors.
- Take position by crouching on knees, head down, with hands locked at the back of the neck. Stay quiet and wait for further instructions.

Required post-relocation procedures—

- Administer first aid if necessary.
- Teachers must take roll once their class has reached the outside assembly area and must report to the designated Student/Staff Coordinator the names of any missing persons.
- Assigned administrative staff will account for all personnel and visitors. All findings must be reported to the designated Student/Staff Accounting Coordinator.

Followup notifications—should be made using the specific Emergency Incident Protocols based on the nature of the emergency.

- Complete the After Action Report on the Web-Based Application (DC Emergency and Safety Alliance Web site) and submit to the Interagency Team.