

Severe Weather Response Procedures

Overview

Severe weather can develop quickly and may include thunderstorms, lightning, high winds, tornadoes, winter storms, flooding, extreme cold, or other hazardous conditions. Colby-Sawyer College monitors weather conditions and works closely with local emergency responders and weather agencies to provide timely information to the campus community.

When severe weather threatens campus, information and instructions may be communicated through CSC ALERT, email, the College website, social media, and other official communication channels.

Before Severe Weather Occurs

Preparation is one of the most effective ways to stay safe during severe weather.

Members of the campus community should:

- Sign up for CSC ALERT and ensure contact information is current.
- Familiarize themselves with building shelter locations and evacuation routes.
- Monitor weather forecasts during periods of potential severe weather.
- Keep mobile devices charged.
- Follow instructions issued by College officials and emergency responders.

Thunderstorms and Lightning

Lightning can strike several miles away from a storm and poses a significant safety risk.

If you hear thunder:

- Move indoors immediately.
- Stay away from windows and exterior doors.
- Avoid using corded electrical devices.
- Do not seek shelter under trees or in open fields.
- Avoid contact with metal objects and water.

Remain indoors for at least 30 minutes after the last sound of thunder.

Tornado Warning or Extreme Wind Event

If a tornado warning is issued or a tornado is observed:

- Move immediately to the lowest level of the building.

- Go to an interior room, hallway, or shelter area away from windows and glass.
- Avoid large open spaces such as gymnasiums, auditoriums, and dining halls whenever possible.
- Cover your head and neck with your arms or available materials.
- Remain in shelter until college officials or emergency responders announce that it is safe to leave.

If you are outdoors and cannot reach a building, seek the lowest available ground and protect your head and neck.

Winter Storms and Extreme Cold

Winter weather can create hazardous travel conditions and increase the risk of cold-related injuries.

During winter storms:

- Limit travel whenever possible.
- Dress in layers and wear appropriate winter clothing.
- Be cautious of icy walkways, stairs, and parking lots.
- Follow College announcements regarding delays, closures, or operational changes.
- Report hazardous conditions to Facilities or Campus Safety.

Watch for signs of frostbite and hypothermia and seek assistance immediately if symptoms occur.

Flooding

Although major flooding is uncommon on campus, localized flooding can occur during heavy rain events.

If flooding occurs:

- Avoid flooded roads, pathways, and parking areas.
- Never walk or drive through floodwaters.
- Move to higher ground if directed to do so.
- Follow instructions from emergency responders and College officials.

Shelter-in-Place During Severe Weather

College officials may direct the campus community to shelter in place when conditions make travel unsafe.

If instructed to shelter in place:

- Remain indoors.
- Move to a safe area within the building.
- Stay away from windows and exterior doors.
- Monitor CSC ALERT and other official College communications for updates.
- Remain sheltered until instructed otherwise.

If Damage Occurs

After severe weather has passed:

- Avoid downed power lines and damaged utility equipment.
- Stay clear of damaged buildings or structures.
- Report injuries, hazards, and property damage to Campus Safety.
- Do not enter damaged areas until they have been evaluated by authorized personnel.

Emergency Communications

During severe weather emergencies, the College may communicate through:

- CSC ALERT
- College email
- Emergency banners on the College website
- Official College social media accounts
- Emergency Information Line
- Campus Safety personnel

All members of the campus community are encouraged to enroll in CSC ALERT to receive timely emergency notifications and instructions.

Emergency Contact Information

Emergency (Police, Fire, EMS): 911

Campus Safety (24 Hours): (603) 526-3300

For additional emergency preparedness information, including fire safety, shelter-in-place procedures, active threat response, and evacuation guidance, visit the Emergency Preparedness section of the College website.