

Storm Swim Club - Lightning Procedure

Bad Weather (lightning, tornado):

1. Evacuate the pool **if weather alarm** is sounding (or use your best judgement based on severity of storm). Dakota and Scott County weather alarms will sound for both severe thunderstorms and tornadoes (see below for more info).
2. Keep all patrons in locker rooms, away from doors.
3. Do not allow patrons to use showers, sinks or make phone calls from landlines.
4. If sirens sound for more than 30 minutes, close the pool.
5. All staff will assist in calling students in upcoming classes, if necessary.
6. Notify building custodians and Aquatics Coordinator.

Notes:

- There are no state recommendations for indoor pools, and the Red Cross directs you to www.lightningsafety.noaa.gov
- Our neighboring district, ISD # 196, does not evacuate for lightning. They also do not evacuate for severe thunderstorm sirens – just for tornado warnings. They shelter for tornado warnings.
- Patron safety is most important which is why notifying the Aquatic Coordinator is listed in the manual as the last step.

Sirens:

Counties and cities own the sirens and therefore decide how and when to activate them. The National Weather Service does not sound them. There are many different policies by counties and cities. Some will activate them across the entire county for a tornado warning only. Others will activate sirens countywide for tornado warnings and all severe thunderstorm warnings. Some will activate sirens across the entire county for tornado warnings and severe thunderstorms that have winds of at least 70 or 75 mph. Others will activate sirens only for portions of counties. Also, local officials may sound the sirens anytime they believe severe weather is a threat, even if there is no warning from the National Weather Service.

When and where are sirens activated?

- Dakota and Scott County activates its sirens for **BOTH severe thunderstorms and tornados.**
- Sirens are activated depending on the areas of the county included in weather warnings issued by the National Weather Service. Warnings can be on a city-by-city basis or for the entire county. The county does not make the decision of where to activate sirens.

- Activation of the sirens can also be triggered by the Dakota Communications Center when notified by local law enforcement officers or a trained network of weather spotters.
- The warning sirens need to be sounded before severe weathers strikes an area because possible electrical outages during severe weather would make the sirens inoperable. During weather emergencies residents will hear a three-minute steady signal of the sirens. The sound range of a siren is about one mile, depending on the surrounding terrain.
- When you hear the siren and are unsure what they are sounding for, go indoors and turn your radio or TV to one of the Emergency Alert Stations (all TV stations and most radio stations in the metro region are EAS equipped) and listen for essential emergency information. Do not call local fire or police agencies to ask why the sirens are sounding. If it is an emergency, they are busy getting equipment and manpower to the emergency scene.

How long do the sirens run during a warning activation?

- The sirens automatically shut off after three minutes. No “all clear” signal is issued. That is why it is important to monitor your local radio and television stations during times of emergency for further information.

Since there is no "All Clear" signal, it is up to employees to determine when it is safe to notify patrons they can leave. Watch/listen to the weather via the internet or cell phone. Staff will advise patrons to stay indoors during a severe storm, however, it is each individual's decision as to whether they want to wait it out or leave. During these warnings staff will also advise patrons to stay away from the showers/sinks and refrain from using the telephones.