

Tornado & Severe Weather Plan — Minnetonka Christian Camp

DRAFT — prepared October 20, 2026 for review and adoption by the Camp Director and Board. Expands the Severe Weather note in Handbook Section 7A into a standalone plan. Not yet in effect.

Purpose

To protect campers, staff, and guests during tornadoes and severe thunderstorms. Oklahoma weather changes fast — the Camp Director monitors conditions whenever campers are on property, and every staff member knows the shelter plan before camp opens.

1. Weather Monitoring

- The Camp Director (or the director on duty) monitors weather radio / radar whenever stormy weather is forecast or approaching, and is the only person who declares shelter or all-clear.
- Know the difference:
 - **Tornado Watch** — Conditions are favorable for tornadoes. Be ready to move. Camp Director notifies all group leaders and counselors. Secure loose outdoor items if it can be done quickly and safely.
 - **Tornado Warning** — A tornado has been sighted or indicated by radar. **Take shelter immediately (Section 2). Do not wait.**

2. Taking Shelter (Tornado Warning)

- Move everyone immediately to the lowest interior room of the **Chapel (M)** or **Cafeteria (E)**, whichever is closest and safest to reach, away from windows, doors, and outside walls.
- Interior bathrooms, closets, and hallways away from windows are backup shelter if the Chapel or Cafeteria cannot be reached safely.
- Crouch low, face an interior wall, and cover head and neck with arms, a mattress, blankets, or sleeping bags if available.
- Counselors take the Church Roster with them and conduct a headcount once sheltered. Report anyone missing to the Camp Director by phone — **do not leave shelter to search.**
- If you are caught outdoors with no safe building in reach: lie flat in the lowest ground available (ditch or low area), cover your head, and stay away from trees, vehicles, and the waterfront. Never shelter under a pavilion, in a vehicle, or in the portable coffee shop building.

- **Night:** Counselors wake every camper, shoes and flashlight in hand, and move the group to shelter immediately. Treat every warning as real.

3. Lightning

- **30/30 rule:** Shelter immediately if thunder follows lightning in under 30 seconds. Wait 30 minutes after the last thunder before resuming outdoor activity.
- On thunder or lightning: all waterfront and pool activity stops, everyone out of the water and off the dock, move indoors. Do not resume until the Camp Director gives the all-clear.

4. Severe Thunderstorms, Hail, and High Wind

- Move indoors ahead of the storm — do not wait for a warning to leave the waterfront, ballfield, or challenge course.
- Stay away from windows during hail and high wind. Keep groups in interior rooms until the storm passes.
- After the storm: watch for downed power lines (treat every line as live — stay away and report to the Camp Director), fallen trees, and damaged roofs before sending anyone back out.

5. All-Clear and After the Storm

- Stay in shelter until the Camp Director gives the all-clear. A warning expiring is not an all-clear.
- After the all-clear: headcount again by roster. Report injuries to the Camp Director immediately and call 911 for anything serious.
- Camp Director inspects buildings and grounds for damage before activities resume, and notifies parents if there was damage, injury, or a shelter event during a warning.
- Log every shelter event (date, warning time, groups sheltered, headcount result) with the camp's safety records.

Related plans: Flood & Evacuation Plan (Handbook Section 7A) and Emergency Quick Reference & Contacts (Handbook Section 7C). Pushmataha County Emergency Management: 580-298-3456 (shelter locations and road closures).