

SEVERE WEATHER POLICY

CHURCH SERVICE CANCELLATIONS

If a *warning* (tornado warning, severe thunderstorm warning, or severe winter weather warning – see definitions below) is declared for Lake County two hours prior to the beginning of a church service, the service will be cancelled. If the warning is forecast to be cancelled prior to one hour before the service, the service will not be cancelled. If there is a power outage two hours prior to a service, the service will be cancelled.

The actual determination to cancel will be made by the pastor with a consensus of the elders.

PROGRAM & EVENT CANCELLATIONS

If a *warning* (tornado warning, severe thunderstorm warning, or severe winter weather warning) is issued for any time during the time of the scheduled program or event, the program or event will be cancelled. If the warning is forecast to be cancelled prior to one hour before the event, the event will not be cancelled. We will not cancel for *outlooks*, *watches* or *advisories* (see definitions below).

If local schools are cancelled for the day a judgment will be made.

The actual determination to cancel children and youth events will be made by the children and youth staff with the consent of the pastor. The determination to cancel other programs or events will be made by the person in charge of the program or event and the pastor.

TORNADO WARNING, SEVERE THUNDERSTORM OCCURS DURING SERVICES

Congregants will be advised to shelter in place in the safest place in the building.

DEFINITIONS OF WATCHES, WARNINGS AND ADVISORIES:

The National Weather Service has developed a multi-tier concept for forecasting all types of hazardous weather. These are:

Outlook - A hazardous weather outlook is issued daily to indicate that a hazardous weather or hydrologic event may occur in the next several days. The outlook will include information about potential severe thunderstorms, heavy rain or flooding, winter weather, extremes of heat or cold, etc., that may develop over the next 7 days with an emphasis on the first 24 hours of the forecast. It is intended to provide information to those who need considerable lead time to prepare for the event.

Watch - A watch is used when the risk of a hazardous weather or hydrologic event has increased significantly, but its occurrence, location or timing is still uncertain. It is intended to provide enough lead time so those who need to set their plans in motion can

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do so. A watch means that hazardous weather is possible. People should have a plan of action in case a storm threatens and they should listen for later information and possible warnings especially when planning travel or outdoor activities.

Warning - A warning is issued when a hazardous weather or hydrologic event is occurring, imminent or likely. A warning means weather conditions pose a threat to life or property. People in the path of the storm need to take protective action.

Advisory - An advisory is issued when a hazardous weather or hydrologic event is occurring, imminent or likely. Advisories are far less serious conditions than warnings that cause significant inconvenience and if caution is not exercised, could lead to situations that may threaten life or property.

HAZARDOUS WEATHER

The hazardous weather warning section of this guide is divided into three types of hazardous weather/hydrologic events.

1. **Severe Local Storms** - These are short-fused, small scale hazardous weather or hydrologic events produced by thunderstorms, including large hail, damaging winds, tornadoes, and flash floods.
2. **Winter Storms** - These are weather hazards associated with freezing or frozen precipitation (freezing rain, sleet, snow) or combined effects of winter precipitation and strong winds.
3. **Other Hazards** - Weather hazards not directly associated with thunderstorms or winter storms including extreme heat or cold, dense fog, high winds, river flooding and lakeshore flooding.

SEVERE LOCAL STORMS

Tornado Watch - Conditions are favorable for the development of severe thunderstorms and tornadoes in and close to the watch area. These watches are issued for large areas by the Storm Prediction Center in Norman, Oklahoma, and are usually valid for four to six hours.

Tornado Warning - Strong rotation in a thunderstorm is indicated by Doppler radar or a tornado is sighted by skywarn spotters. These warnings are issued on a county by county basis by the local Weather Forecast office in Chicago/Romeoville.

Severe Thunderstorm Watch - Conditions are favorable for the development of severe thunderstorms in and close to the watch area. These watches are issued for large areas

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by the Storm Prediction Center in Norman, Oklahoma, and are usually valid for four to six hours.

Severe Thunderstorm Warning - A severe thunderstorm is indicated by Doppler radar or sighted by skywarn spotters. A severe thunderstorm contains large damaging hail, 3/4 inch diameter or larger, and/or damaging winds of around 60 mph or greater. These warnings are issued on a county by county basis by the local Weather Forecast Office in Chicago/Romeoville.

WINTER STORMS

Winter Storm Watch - Conditions are favorable for hazardous winter weather conditions including heavy snow, blizzard conditions, or significant accumulations of freezing rain or sleet. These watches are issued by the Weather Service Forecast Office in Chicago and are usually issued 12 to 36 hours in advance of the event.

Winter Storm Warning - Hazardous winter weather conditions that pose a threat to life and/or property are occurring, imminent or likely. The generic term, winter storm warning, is used for a combination of two or more of the following winter weather events; heavy snow, freezing rain, sleet and strong winds. The following event-specific warnings are issued for a single weather hazard:

- **Blizzard Warning** - Sustained winds or frequent gusts of 35 mph or greater, considerable falling and/or blowing snow reducing visibility frequently to 1/4 mile or less for a period of three hours or more. There are no temperature criteria in the definition of a blizzard but freezing temperatures and 35 mph winds will create sub-zero wind chills.
- **Heavy Snow Warning** - Snowfall of 6 inches or more in 12 hours or less, or 8 inches or more in 24 hours or less.
- **Lake Effect Snow Warning** - Lake effect snowfall of 6 inches or more in 12 hours or less, or 8 inches or more in 24 hours or less.
- **Ice Storm Warning** - Accumulations of 1/4 inch or more of freezing rain.
- **Heavy Sleet Warning** - Accumulations of 1/2 inch or more of sleet.

Winter Weather Advisory - Hazardous winter weather conditions are occurring, imminent or likely. Conditions will cause a significant inconvenience and if caution is not exercised, will result in a potential threat to life and/or property. The generic term, winter weather advisory, is used for a combination of two or more of the following events; snow, freezing rain or drizzle, sleet, blowing snow. The following event-specific advisories are issued for these single weather hazards:

- **Snow Advisory** - Snowfall of 3 to 5 inches.
- **Lake Effect Snow Advisory** - **Lake effect snowfall of 3 to 5 inches.**
- **Freezing Rain Advisory** - Accumulations of less than 1/4 inch of freezing rain or freezing drizzle.

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- **Sleet Advisory** - For accumulations of less than 1/2 inch of sleet.
- **Snow and Blowing Snow Advisory** - Sustained winds or frequent gusts of 25 to 35 mph accompanied by falling and blowing snow, occasionally reducing visibility to 1/4 mile or less.

OTHER HAZARDS

Wind Chill Warning - Extreme wind chills of -30°F or colder.

Wind Chill Advisory - Dangerous wind chills of -20°F to -30°F.

Excessive Heat Warning - Extreme values of the heat index.

Chicago metro area:

1. 3 consecutive days with maximum heat index 100 to 105°F with at least 85% sunshine on two of the days, or minimum heat index 75°F or greater each day, **or**
2. Two consecutive days with the maximum heat index 105 to 110°F, **or**
3. 1 day with the maximum heat index 110°F or greater.

Remainder of northern Illinois and northwest Indiana:

Maximum heat index of 110°F or greater and minimum of 75°F for two or more consecutive days.

Heat Advisory - Maximum heat index of 105 to 110°F with a minimum of 75°F for two or more consecutive days. (Heat Advisories not issued for the Chicago metro area.)

The National Weather Service issues these watches, warnings and advisories, they can be found at www.weather.gov