



SEVERE WEATHER/NATURAL DISASTER
CODE BROWN
CODE BROWN-STRIKE

Policy:

The following plan will be followed in the event of severe weather conditions.

Purpose:

Severe weather, in the form of tornadoes, hurricanes, windstorms, and/or electrical storms, may pose a serious threat to patients and employees at the hospital. This policy will provide guidance when severe weather conditions are present and a possible threat to the hospital.

Special Instructions:

Hurricane Watch: The National Weather Service defines a hurricane **watch** as 36 through 48 hours prior to the possibility of a hurricane's arrival.

Tornado Watch: The National Weather Service defines a tornado **watch** as when conditions in the area are such that a tornado is likely.

Hurricane Warning: The National Weather Service defines a hurricane **warning** as 24 through 36 hours prior to the possibility of a hurricane's arrival.

Tornado Warning: The National Weather Service defines a tornado **warning** as that point in time when a tornado has been sighted in North Central Florida.

Hurricane Storm Stage: The National Weather Service defines the hurricane storm stage as 12 hours before a hurricane will strike, and until the hurricane has passed.

Tornado Strike: This is defined as the time that a tornado has been sighted and may strike the hospital.

Saffir-Simpson Hurricane Scale: The National Hurricane Center defines the Saffir-Simpson Hurricane Scale as a 1-5 rating based on the hurricane's present intensity. This is used to give an estimate of the potential property damage and flooding expected along the coast from a hurricane landfall. Wind speed is the determining factor in the scale, as the storm surge values are highly dependent on the slope of the continental shelf and the shape of the coastline in the landfall region. Note that all



Category One Hurricane: Winds 74-95 mph. Storm surge generally 4-5 feet above normal. No real damage to building structures. Damage primarily to unanchored mobile homes, shrubbery, and trees. Some damage to poorly constructed signs. Also, some coastal road flooding and minor pier damage.

Category Two Hurricane: Winds 96-110 mph. Storm surge generally 6-8 feet above normal. Some roofing material, door, and window damage of buildings. Considerable damage to shrubbery and trees with some trees blown down. Considerable damage to mobile homes, poorly constructed signs, and piers. Coastal and low-lying escape routes flood 2-4 hours before arrival of the hurricane center. Small craft in unprotected anchorages break moorings.

Category Three Hurricane: Winds 111-130 mph. Storm surge generally 9-12 feet above normal. Some structural damage to small residences and utility buildings with a minor amount of curtainwall failures. Damage to shrubbery and trees with foliage blown off trees and large trees blown down. Mobile homes and poorly constructed signs are destroyed. Low-lying escape routes are cut by rising water 3-5 hours before arrival of the center of the hurricane. Flooding near the coast destroys smaller structures with larger structures damaged by battering from floating debris. Terrain continuously lower than 5 feet above mean sea level may be flooded inland 8 miles or more. Evacuation of low-lying residences within several blocks of the shoreline may be required.

Category Four Hurricane: Winds 131-155 mph. Storm surge generally 13-18 feet above normal. More extensive curtainwall failures with some complete roof structure failures on small residences. Shrubs, trees, and all signs are blown down. Complete destruction of mobile homes. Extensive damage to doors and windows. Low-lying escape routes may be cut by rising water 3-5 hours before arrival of the center of the hurricane. Major damage to lower floors of structures near the shore. Terrain lower than 10 feet above sea level may be flooded requiring massive evacuation of residential areas as far inland as 6 miles.

Category Five Hurricane: Winds greater than 155 mph. Storm surge generally greater than 18 feet above normal. Complete roof failure on many residences and industrial buildings. Some complete building failures with small utility buildings blown over or away. All shrubs, trees, and signs blown down. Complete destruction of mobile homes. Severe and extensive window and door damage. Low-lying escape routes are cut by rising water 3-5 hours before arrival of the center of the hurricane. Major damage to lower floors of all structures located less than 15 feet above sea level and within 500 yards of the shoreline. Massive evacuation of residential areas on low ground within 5-10 miles of the shoreline may be required.

Weather Stages:

Pre-Weather Watch Stage – this stage only involves communication between the National Weather Service, Administration, and the Operator.

When the National Weather Service issues a hurricane/tornado watch that will involve North Central Florida, the Administrator or their designee shall instruct the Operator to implement the severe weather watch procedure.

Severe Weather Watch Stage - This stage of the plan only involves communication between the National Weather Service, Administration and the Operator.

If deemed necessary, inform the Supervisor of Maintenance or designee to contact all contractors to evaluate and prepare their job sites for safety.

The Operator will monitor the National Weather Service via weather radio and transmit to Administration all weather advisories. The Operator contacting the Administrator shall request permission to implement the severe weather watch plan.

When instructed to implement the plan, notify the following:

Facility Safety Officer
Supervisor of Maintenance
Emergency Department
Admissions Department Head

No public address system page is necessary during the severe weather watch stage. When the danger has passed, the Operator will be instructed by Administration to notify the above to resume normal activities.

Supervisor of Maintenance:

Building and ground safety preparedness instructions shall be given by the above department manager or designated representative.

Consider the following:

Grounds to be cleared of equipment and debris that could become airborne.
Secure equipment than cannot be moved inside.
Tape and board windows ONLY if deemed necessary.



Close all hallway windows, doors, and blinds.

Determine if and when doors need to be secured and who will do so. If the decision is made to secure doors, secure all doors leading to the outside except the emergency department entrance.

Severe Weather Plan (Hospital-wide Alert Stage):

Special Instructions:

Manpower Pool:

Location: Hospital Conference Room

Each department shall send a representative to the Manpower Pool for weather information and further instructions.

Administration:

When the National Weather Service upgrades the watch to a **warning** stage for this area, the Administrator or designee shall instruct the Operator to implement the severe weather warning procedure (**CODE BROWN**).

The Administrator or designee shall relay information to the Manpower Pool (Conference Room) regarding the circumstances surrounding the code.

When the danger has passed, the Administrator will instruct the Operator to announce code recall.

Operator:

When the National Weather Service upgrades to a severe weather warning, the Operator shall notify Administration, who will then instruct the Operator to activate the severe warning procedure (**CODE BROWN**), if deemed necessary. Voice page a minimum of five times at ten second intervals.

Alert the following:

Supervisor of Maintenance
Emergency Department
Admissions Department Head

When the danger has passed, the Operator will be instructed by the Administrator to recall the code.



The Operator will announce “**CODE BROWN RECALL**” three times at ten second intervals.

All Personnel:

All personnel on duty shall report to their department.

Prepare department for severe weather threat.

- Clear all hallways
- Close all windows, doors, and blinds
- Secure work area
- Stand by until phase is recalled

Nursing Services Instructions:

Prepare department for severe weather (see above for instructions).
Obtain portable oxygen tanks from Respiratory/Supervisor

Impending Tornado Strike Stage:

Administration shall be notified, if advised by the National Weather Service, that a tornado is an imminent threat to the hospital and **CODE BROWN – STRIKE** implemented.

Paging: “**ATTENTION: CODE BROWN – STRIKE IS IN EFFECT**”

Voice page the above a minimum of five times at ten second intervals and every few minutes thereafter until danger is passed and code recalled.

Administration:

In event of an imminent threat of severe weather to the hospital, the internal evacuation procedure shall be implemented.

Internal Evacuation Procedure:

1. Evacuate patients and visitors to “safer” inner corridors of the hospital. Close all doors.
2. Use emergency evacuation assists or patient carrier techniques for removal of patients from their beds.
3. Avoid moving beds into hallways.
4. No wheelchairs or stretchers are to be used in hallways.



5. Use blankets, sheets and spreads for transportation and protection of patients and others.
6. If patients are in other areas of the hospital (such as Radiology), do not attempt to transport them back to their assigned units. Move them to “safer” areas of the department.
7. Staff shall stand by until alert is recalled.
8. If MCMH is struck by a tornado, the disaster plan will be implemented (HEICS activated, Incident Command set up where possible). Use the Hospital Staging Plan, where possible, with the EOC to coordinate.