



Inclement Weather Policy

For events hosted by the East and West Dearborn Downtown Development Authorities (DDAs)

I. Purpose

This policy outlines the procedures and conditions under which events hosted by the East and West Dearborn Downtown Development Authorities (DDAs) may be canceled, postponed, or modified due to inclement weather. The primary purpose of this policy is to ensure the safety of all attendees, vendors, staff, and volunteers, while also providing clear communication and a fair process for all stakeholders, especially for events with paid vendor participation.

II. Decision-Making Authority and Communication

- **Decision-Maker:** The decision to cancel or postpone an event will be made by the Director of the Economic Development Department, in consultation with appropriate city officials and safety personnel (e.g., Mayor's Office, Dearborn Police and Fire Departments). In the Director or Deputy Director's absence, decisions will be made by the Special Events & Outreach Manager.
- **Timing of Decisions:**
 - **Paid Vendor Events** (e.g. Dearborn Summer Market): A final decision will be made no later than **6 hours** prior to the scheduled start time to allow for logistics adjustment.
 - **Free Public Events** (e.g. Jingle Bell Bash): A final decision will be made no later than 4 hours prior to the scheduled start time.
 - **Sudden On-Site Emergencies:** The DDAs reserve the right to suspend or cancel an event immediately at any time if a sudden, dangerous weather event occurs (e.g. unexpected high winds, lightning) that was not forecasted.
- **External Communication Channels:** All event updates, including cancellations, will be communicated through the following official channels:
 - Official DDA social media pages (e.g., Facebook, Instagram)
 - Direct email to registered vendors and pre-registered attendees.
 - Local media outlets (if appropriate).
- **Internal Communication Channels:**
 - Internal staff channels (email, Google chat).

III. Weather Scenarios and Actions

The following weather scenarios will guide the decision to cancel or modify an event.



1. Severe Weather Watch or Warning:

- **Tornado Watch/Warning:** A tornado warning will result in immediate event suspension or cancellation. If the tornado watch/warning occurs during the event, all attendees, vendors, and staff will be instructed to seek immediate shelter, as identified by the Special Events & Outreach Manager's site plan.
- **Severe Thunderstorm Watch/Warning:** Consideration will be given to the severity of the storm, including wind speeds (see below), lightning, and heavy rainfall that could lead to flooding.
 - i. **Lightning:** If lightning is spotted or detected within a 10-mile radius, the event will be automatically cancelled.
 - ii. **Flash Flood Warning:** Cancellation if event grounds are compromised.

2. Extreme Temperatures (Cold and Heat)

- **Extreme Heat:** If the heat index (a combination of air temperature and humidity) is forecast above **100°F**, the event may be canceled to prevent heat exhaustion.
 - i. **Measurement Standard:** This determination will be based on the maximum "Feels Like" temperature (Heat Index) forecast by the National Weather Service (NOAA) for Dearborn, MI, reviewed 4 hours prior to the event start time.
- **Extreme Cold:** If the wind chill (a combination between air temperature and wind speed) is below **15°F**, the event will be canceled.
 - i. If wind chill is greater than 15°F but lower than 25°F, staff will engage in rotational, mandatory 10-minute warm-up breaks every 45 minutes.
 - ii. **Measurement Standard:** This determination will be based on the "Feels Like" temperature forecast by the National Weather Service (NOAA) for Dearborn, MI, reviewed 4 hours prior to the event start time.

3. Hazardous Air Quality

- Decisions regarding air quality will be based on the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Air Quality Index (AQI) as reported by official sources such as AirNow.gov or the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE).
- **Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups (AQI 101-150):** The event may proceed, but the DDAs will issue a strong recommendation for sensitive groups (including children, older adults, and individuals with heart or lung disease) to limit their time outdoors and avoid strenuous activity. Information about the air quality will be posted at the event. Masks will also be provided at the information desk. These recommendations will be posted on social media and on event signage.
- **Unhealthy (AQI 151-200) and Very Unhealthy or Hazardous (AQI 201+):** The event organizers reserve the right to cancel the event at the "Unhealthy" range. Events will likely be cancelled in this range unless a downward trend is forecasted. The event will be automatically cancelled at the "Hazardous" range.



AQI in these ranges indicates a significant health risk to the entire population. Outdoor events cannot safely proceed under these conditions.

4. Other Conditions:

- **High Winds:** Sustained wind speeds pose a risk to temporary structures, tents, signage, or other event equipment. The decision to modify or cancel activities due to wind will be based on the operational safety limits of temporary structures and equipment. Wind speeds will be monitored using NWS data.
- **Tier 1: Suspension of Inflatables & Small Tents (Sustained 15+ mph / Gusts 25+ mph)**
 - If sustained winds exceed **15 mph** or gusts exceed **25 mph**, all inflatables and any tents under 10x20 must be secured and/or deflated immediately.
 - The event may continue, but these specific inflatable attractions will be closed.
- **Tier 2: Event Cancellation (Sustained 25+ mph / Gusts 35+ mph)**
 - If sustained winds exceed **25 mph** or gusts exceed **35 mph**, the safety of larger 20x20 tents is compromised, as well as the secured 10x20 tents.
 - At this level, the event will be suspended or canceled, and all attendees will be instructed to leave the immediate area of temporary structures.
- **Heavy Precipitation (Rain or Snow):** While light rain or snow may not result in cancellation, heavy, continuous precipitation that would create an unsafe or unpleasant environment for vendors and attendees (e.g., muddy grounds, standing water) may lead to cancellation.
- **Road Conditions:** If weather conditions make travel to and from the event unsafe for vendors and attendees (e.g., icy roads, poor visibility), the event may be canceled.

5. **Staff Considerations:** If staff has health conditions that make them unfit to work in particular circumstances, such as with AQI from 101-150, they must pre-emptively send an email to their supervisor indicating they need accommodations.

IV. Policy for Paid Vendor Events

For events such as the **Summer Market** or **Fall Bazaar**, where vendors have paid to participate, the following applies:

1. **Rescheduled Dates:** In the event of a weather-related cancellation, the DDAs will have a pre-planned, alternative rain date for the event. This date will be communicated to all vendors in their initial registration packet and contract.



2. **No Refunds for Partial Events:** If an event is in progress and must be suspended or canceled due to a sudden weather emergency, no refunds will be provided. The DDAs will have made all reasonable efforts to host the event.
3. If the rescheduled Rain Date must also be canceled due to inclement weather, no further dates will be scheduled, and refunds will not be issued.

V. General Considerations

- **"Rain or Shine" vs. "Safety First":** Events are generally held rain or shine, but the ultimate decision is always based on the safety of all participants.
- **Event Modification:** The DDAs reserve the right to modify an event rather than cancel it, such as by delaying the start time or ending early.
- **Vendor Responsibility:** Vendors are responsible for securing their own booths and equipment against expected weather conditions, such as light rain or wind.
- **Liability:** The DDAs are not responsible for any financial loss incurred by vendors or attendees due to a weather-related cancellation or modification. It is the responsibility of vendors to have appropriate insurance to cover such losses.
- **Supporting Vendor Agreements:** This policy will be reflected in all supporting vendor agreements.

By registering for and participating in DDA-hosted events, vendors and attendees agree to abide by this policy. The DDAs will act in the best interest of public safety and will communicate all decisions promptly and transparently.



Appendix 1: Cold Weather Index

- [Washington Park District, IL:](#)
 - Wind Chill of 15 to 30 degrees: Programs may be shortened, and participants should dress accordingly.
 - Wind Chill of 0 to 14 degrees: Similar to the above, with more significant modifications to activities. Programs may be moved indoors if possible.
 - Wind Chill below 0 degrees: Programs will be moved indoors if possible, and all other outdoor activities may be canceled.
- [Naperville Park District, Illinois](#)
 - Wind Chill of 0 to 14 degrees – Parents and participants are encouraged to dress appropriately for weather conditions using clothing suggested above. Programs may be modified to reduce the length of outdoor activities. Programs will be moved indoors if an indoor option is available.
 - Wind Chill below 0 degrees – Programs will be moved indoors if an indoor option is available. All other outdoor activities may be cancelled.
- **Carroll County, MD (Recreation & Parks): Cancel:** Outdoor activities cease if the temperature or wind chill is **below 13°F**.
- [Beverly Hills, MI:](#) If the wind chill is at or below -10 degrees, all outdoor Parks and Recreation Board scheduled activities will be canceled.
- [Novi, MI:](#) Uses discretion of P&R staff to make cancellation decisions.
- [Livonia, MI:](#) If the wind chill is at or below -10 degrees, all outdoor P&R activities will be canceled.
- [Common Greens \(OH\) Farmers Market:](#) If heat index is <0F, the market will be cancelled.

Source: [National Weather Service](#)

A wind chill of -20° Fahrenheit (F) will cause frostbite in just 30 minutes. Frostbite causes a loss of feeling and a white or pale appearance in extremities, such as fingers, toes, ear lobes or the tip of the nose.

Source: [OSHA](#)

Although OSHA does not have a specific standard that covers working in cold environments, under the Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSH Act) of 1970, employers have a duty to protect workers from recognized hazards, including cold stress hazards, that are causing or likely to cause death or serious physical harm in the workplace.

Various Sources



If you were to average all the public school districts in Michigan, the most common "magic number" for moving recess indoors is 10°F to 15°F. While there is no single state law dictating a specific temperature, the majority of Michigan's 500+ districts follow a set of informal "best practices" that generally fall into these three tiers:

1. The Cold Weather Average (Winter)

The "Standard" Cutoff: 15°F (Wind Chill/Real Feel). This is the most frequent number found in handbooks from Grand Rapids to Traverse City.

2. The "Hard Limit": 0°F. Almost no school in Michigan will send children out if the wind chill is below zero. Example: Ann Arbor

3. The "Southern vs. Northern" Divide: * Southern Michigan (Detroit/Lansing): Often more conservative, sometimes moving indoors at 20°F if the wind is high.

4. Northern Michigan/U.P.: Schools in the Upper Peninsula are famously "tougher" on this; many do not call for indoor recess until it hits 0°F or even -5°F, provided the sun is out and kids have full gear.

Appendix 2: Heat Index

- **City of Winona, MN (Youth Sports):** Reduces activity time by 15 minutes when the Heat Index is **100°F–104°F** and cancel all activities when the index reaches **105°F+**.
- **Johnson County Park & Rec, KS:** Issues a "Heat Warning" and cancels games when the Heat Index is **above 105°F**. For indices between 95°F and 105°F, they shorten games and mandate water breaks, similar to The Villages' caution zones.
- **[Livonia Parks & Recreation \(MI\)](#):** If the heat Index is **≥ 104°F**, all outdoor activities are canceled. If at 103 and below, cancellation is at the discretion of the Athletic Coordinator.
- **[Washington Park District \(IL\)](#):** If Heat Index is > 103°F, programs move indoors if possible; otherwise, field trips and outdoor activities are canceled.
- **North Ridgeville Parks & Rec (OH):** If Heat Index is > 104°F, all outside activity stops. Modify (99°F–104°F): Mandatory water breaks every 30 minutes; helmets/pads must be removed when not actively involved in contact.
- **Beverly Hills Parks & Rec (MI):** If Heat Index is > 104°F, all outside activity stops.
- **[Common Greens \(OH\) Farmers Market](#):** If heat index is >105F, the market will be cancelled.
- **[West St Paul \(MN\)](#):** Cancellation, Pause or Delay of outdoor events, classes, and programs serving primarily young children (under 13 years of age), seniors, and other vulnerable groups: If heat index is expected to reach and sustain 105 degrees or more.



Appendix 3: Air Quality

- [Common Greens \(OH\) Farmers Market](#): If the Air Quality Index is 201 or higher the market will be cancelled.
- [Jefferson County Farmers Markets \(WA\)](#): If API >200, the market will be canceled. If API >150, the Market will have reduced hours and/or reduced set-up times. N95 masks will be provided for market staff.
- [West St Paul \(MN\)](#): If AQI is expected to reach and sustain 'red-unhealthy' or index values of 151-200.

Appendix 4: Sustained Winds

- [Jefferson County Farmers Markets \(WA\)](#): Sustained winds >35mph
- [Seattle Neighborhood Farmers Markets \(WA\)](#): If winds exceed and sustain at 35mph, the market will close early.
 - Wind Protocol: "We are preparing for winds above 15mph at this week's market (wind protocol attached). Please come prepared with an extra set of tent weights. We also ask that you downsize your display to minimize potential product loss."
- Exclusive Event Rentals (MI):
 - Canopy Tents (10x20): Limited to 25mph gusts and 15mph winds.
 - 20x20 tents: Limited to 35mph gusts and 25mph winds.
 - Inflatable games: Limited to 30mph gusts and 20mph winds.
 - Bounce houses: Limited to 25mph gusts and 15mph winds.
- Alpharetta Farmers Market (GA): If the forecast predicts **20+ MPH sustainable winds** in Alpharetta (with or without rain) the Market on Saturday will be closed.
- South Hadley Farmers Market (MA): If thunderstorms, high winds (**over 25mph**), or severe and consistent rain occurs prior to the opening... the market opening may be delayed, or cancelled altogether.

Appendix 5: Additional Resources

- www.wafarmersmarkettoolkit-org.wafarmersmarkets.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/MIFMA-emergency-procedures.pdf
- [Westland, MI Farmers Market](#) (managed by the Westland Chamber of Commerce).