



Emergency Weather Response Plan

**Ahrens Park Outdoor Complex
Penrose Street, Grinnell, IA 50112**

Updated June 1, 2018

OVERVIEW:

The purpose of the Ahrens Park Foundation (APF) emergency response plan is to prevent or reduce harm to patrons of Ahrens Park outdoor athletic, wellness and recreational activities and participants in events held at the Ahrens Park outdoor complex.

The emergency response plan is a policy of APF that must be adhered to by those organizations and entities that utilize and/or lease the Ahrens Park outdoor complex or venues therein (Permitted Organizational Users).

The plan outlines guidelines and procedures that should be followed in the event of threatening and/or severe inclement weather.

The emergency response plan is to be posted on the APF's website and distributed to the Permitted Organizational Users of the Ahrens Park outdoor complex and the venues therein. It is strongly encouraged that Permitted Organizational Users, when applicable, post the emergency response plan on their websites and distribute the emergency response plan to participants (e.g. via registration packets). Copies of the plan are to be posted in all Ahrens Park concession stands, the Ahrens Foundation offices, and the Grinnell Athletic and Recreation Center.

EMERGENCY RESPONSE ADVISORY GROUP:

The Emergency Response Advisory Group consists of APF staff and board members, and representatives of organizations with long-term leasing relationships with the APF. The team develops and implements the APF's emergency response plan for the Ahrens Park outdoor complex. The following individuals currently serve on the Emergency Response Advisory Group:

1. Shannon Fitzgerald, APF Board Treasurer
2. Julie Gosselink, APF Board Assistant Treasurer
3. Shane Gosselink, Ahrens Park Facilities Manager
4. GYBSA Board of Director
5. Director of Parks & Recreation for the City of Grinnell

EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM AND CONTACT INFO:

An essential part of an effective emergency response plan is an emergency response team. The members of the Emergency Response Team are the primary points of contact in the event of an emergency or severe weather situation.

Shane Gosselink, Ahrens Park Facilities Manager
shane@ahrensfamilyfoundation.org

(641)-236-5518 office
(641)-990-0171 cell

Julie Gosselink, (Backup to Ahrens Park Facilities Manager)
julie@ahrensfamilyfoundation.org

(641)236-5518 office
(641)990-9923 cell

EMERGENCY	911
Non-Emergency Police	(641)236-2670
Non-Emergency Fire	(641)236-2688
Grinnell Regional Medical Center	(641)236-7511

The Ahrens Park Facilities Manager or the Emergency Response Advisory Group can make changes, with the approval of the APF board, to this plan throughout the year. If there are changes made to the plan, the Permitted Organizational Users will be made aware of the changes.

POLICY FOR CANCELLATIONS AND/OR DELAYS:

Cancellations and/or Delays – prior to start of event (practice, competition or event)

Events may be cancelled or delayed due to unsafe venue/field conditions or hazardous weather conditions. The determination to cancel or delay use of the Ahrens Park outdoor complex or venues therein will be made by the Ahrens Park Facilities Manager and communicated to the appropriate Permitted Organizational Users. In the case that the Ahrens Park Facilities Manager is not in communication with the Permitted Organizational Users in a timely manner then the decision becomes that of the Permitted Organizational Users using the athletic fields and/or Ahrens Park outdoor complex.

Cancellations and/or Delays – after the start of event

The Ahrens Park Facilities Manager may close the Ahrens Park outdoor complex or venues therein at any point in time (including after the start of an event) due to unsafe venue/field or hazardous weather.

Cancellations and/or Delays – after the start of practice or competition

Once a game or competition has begun, the coaches, umpire/official, or field supervisor/event administrator hold the responsibility of determining game delay or termination. The Ahrens Park Facilities Manager has the authority to override the decision due to unsafe venue/field conditions or hazardous weather.

If a game or practice is delayed, then coaches, umpire/official, or field supervisor/event administrator are to carefully inspect the field for safety prior to the beginning of any activity. Activity may recommence only after a determination that the field is safe.

It is the responsibility of the Permitted Organizational User to have policies and procedures in place to ensure the care and safety of minors in the event of game delay or cancellation.

POLICY FOR SEVERE INCLEMENT WEATHER:

In the case of severe inclement weather, all patrons should immediately evacuate the Ahrens Park outdoor complex, including all parking areas due to:

1. Sounding of the City of Grinnell’s tornado sirens
2. Sounding of bullhorn
3. Loss of electrical power at night
4. Ahrens Park Facilities Manager or the onsite tournament Director or Field Supervisor (designated by the leasing organization) decides that inclement weather may endanger patrons

(Please note that APF is not able to accommodate hundreds(+) of patrons in an indoor storm shelter that would be deemed safe enough in severe inclement weather.)

Weather Conditions:

Tornadoes

At any point during a practice, competition or event there is a tornado warning issued by the National Weather Service for the local area, or the sounding of the City of Grinnell's tornado sirens occurs or there is a tornado sighted, the practice, competition or event must be cancelled immediately and everyone should evacuate the premises.

(The City of Grinnell tornado warning system conducts a test each Thursday at 9 a.m. if no severe weather is predicted.)

In the event of a tornado watch, it is recommended that a representative of the Permitted Organizational User immediately communicate to all of its patrons that a tornado watch has been issued for the local area and whether the practice, competition or event will be delayed or cancelled.

Lightning and Thunder

If a practice, competition or event is in progress and thunder and/or lightning is detected within 6 miles (and/or in the event of a thunderstorm warning), the coaches, umpire/official, or field supervisor/event administrator shall immediately stop play and instruct everyone to go to a safe area. Neither participants nor spectators may remain on the field or out in any open areas without a roof. Practice, competition or events are not permitted to continue until 30 minutes after a flash of lightning (or the sound of thunder within 6 miles). If lightning and thunder continue, the 30-minute time period shall start over after each incidence of lightning or thunder. Practices, competition and events may not resume until the 'all-clear' is given by the coaches, umpire/official, or field supervisor/event administrator.

In the event of a thunderstorm watch, it is recommended that a representative of the Permitted Organizational User immediately communicate to all of its patrons that a thunderstorm watch has been issued for the local area and whether the practice, competition or event will be delayed or cancelled.

Rain

Light rain that does not create an unsafe environment may not be cause to stop a practice, competition or event as long as the coaches, umpire/official, or field supervisor/event administrator conclude that the field is safe. However, heavy rain that leads to pooling or soaking wet field conditions may cause delay or termination of a practice, competition or event. Besides pooling and slick field conditions, heavy downpours can also cause very poor visibility putting patrons in danger. Therefore it is the responsibility of the coaches, umpire/official, or field supervisor/event administrator to stop the practice, competition or event.

COMMUNICATIONS PLAN:

APF strongly recommends that Permitted Organizational Users using the Ahrens Park outdoor complex for regularly scheduled, special or tournament events implement annually an effective communications plan to help assure all patrons are alerted and kept safe in the event of severe inclement weather. APF recommends, at a minimum:

1. All Permitted Organizational Users maintain updated contact lists/phone trees of individuals (staff, board members, safety committee members, coaches, umpires, officials, etc.) and provide these lists annually to the APF Emergency Response Team in order to effectively and efficiently contact each other in the event of an emergency.

2. Use social media as a communications tool to let patrons know of any delays or cancellations that may be affecting their activities due to inclement weather.
3. Urge all parents, guardians and players to sign up for “group text message alerts and notifications” through their organizations that are leasing the Ahrens Park outdoor complex for special events and/or tournaments or that are leasing any of the athletic fields in order to receive immediate important announcements and communications in the event of inclement weather. Instructions for signing up could be part of the initial program or team registration process for each organization.

One of these text platforms can be provided by Poweshiek County’s Emergency Notification System (PCENS), which is a mass notification service provided by Poweshiek County Emergency Management Agency (PCEMA). PCENS gives PCEMA the ability to send out mass notifications regarding emergency or general events. These messages can be sent to specific locations or county wide. Residents can also select to receive weather warnings on their mobile phone. This is currently a free opt-in service available to all Poweshiek County residents. To sign up, go to www.poweshiekready.org

4. Use a weather radio, with extra batteries always on hand, along with the “Little League® WeatherBug” app that can be used and promoted by all Permitted Organizational Users that are leasing the Ahrens Park outdoor complex for special events or tournaments or who are leasing any of the athletic fields. The Little League® WeatherBug app is a mobile weather app providing coaches, managers, parents, family and friends with real-time weather, severe weather alerts, and personalized lightning detection to help stay safer during practice and games.

Little League® WeatherBug app is available for download on both Google Play and the iTunes App Store for free. This app provides several unique features to keep patrons informed and alerted via Android phones and tablets, iPhones and iPads.

5. Sound a bullhorn to let patrons know that everyone is to evacuate the Ahrens Park outdoor complex immediately due to the threat of severe inclement weather. Bullhorn should periodically be checked to assure proper functioning and extra batteries, if needed should always be on hand.
6. As previously indicated in the Overview section, the emergency response plan is to be posted on the APF’s website, and distributed to Permitted Organizational Users. Additionally, it is strongly encouraged that Permitted Organizational Users, when applicable, post the emergency response plan on their websites and distribute the emergency response plan to participants (via registration packets). Copies of the plan are to be posted in all Ahrens Park concession stands, the Ahrens Foundation offices, and the Grinnell Athletic and Recreation Center.