



## TENT STORM GUIDELINES

Under normal weather conditions, tents provide an excellent haven for outdoor events. However, tents are only temporary structures made of fabric and are not intended to be occupied during extreme weather conditions. Thunder and lightning storms in particular pose a significant safety risk for tented events.

**WHEN YOU HAVE A LIGHTNING STORM IN THE VICINITY, THE BEST COURSE OF ACTION IS TO EVACUATE THE TENT, WITH THE SAFEST PLACE BEING AN ENCLOSED BUILDING.**

To do otherwise would jeopardize the safety of you and your guests. There really is no alternative, even if there is a small chance that someone could be injured it is not a chance that any of us should take. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) maintains these recommendations on their website regarding lightning and thunder storm safety:

*...there is little you can do to substantially reduce your risk if you are outside in a thunderstorm. The only completely safe action is to get inside a safe building or vehicle.*

*A safe building is one that is fully enclosed with a roof, walls and floor, and has plumbing or wiring. Examples include a home, school, church, hotel, office building or shopping center. Once inside, stay away from showers, sinks, bath tubs, and electronic equipment such as TVs, radios, corded telephones and computers. Unsafe buildings include car ports, open garages, covered patios, picnic shelters, beach pavilions, golf shelters, **tents of any kind**, baseball dugouts, sheds and greenhouses.*

*Run to a safe building or vehicle when you first hear thunder, see lightning or observe dark threatening clouds developing overhead. Stay inside until 30 minutes after you hear the last clap of thunder. Do not shelter under trees. You are not safe anywhere outside.*

*If you are in a group, make sure all leaders or members of the group have a lightning safety plan and are ready to use it. If you are part of a large group, you will need extra time to get everyone to a safe place.*

Should a thunderstorm arrive during the time that your tent is in place, it is best to evacuate the tent and entertain your guests in a building for the duration of the storm. We also advise our clients to develop and coordinate an evacuation plan with all of the event professionals involved in advance of the event day.



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Here are a few things to consider when developing an emergency evacuation plan:

- Who will make the evacuation decision, and how will the decision be made?
- Who will calmly announce the decision to the guests, professionals, and staff?
- Where is the alternate building located?
- Ensure that the alternate location is prepared (beverage service, bathrooms stocked, etc.).
- Remember to evacuate everyone (wait staff, etc.).
- Who will make the decision to return to the tent?

For more information, please visit the National Weather Service ([weather.gov](http://weather.gov)).