

Apartment Communities

Preventing Damage from Thunderstorms A Guide for Property Managers or Owners

Thunderstorms can happen quickly and cause significant damage to apartment buildings and communities. By preparing ahead of time and working closely with tenants, you can help protect your community from high wind and rain.

Seasonal Prep

Ahead of severe weather, become familiar with important steps you can take to help reduce damage later.

- ❑ Gather key contact information residents will find useful in the event of severe weather and distribute via email, flyers, social media, message boards, or other preferred communication method for your community. Include the following:
 - Property manager or owner contact information
 - Emergency (after hours) maintenance number
 - How to obtain info/status for the apartment building/community (i.e., phone number or website)
 - Power/electric company number in case of downed lines
- ❑ Determine the best way for residents to submit maintenance requests in the event of severe weather. Ask tenants to report water damage as soon as possible.

- ❑ Remind residents to become familiar with their renters insurance policy and advise them to learn how to properly file claims. If renters insurance is not mandatory in your community, recommend residents purchase a policy.
- ❑ Encourage tenants to take inventory of their apartments by taking time-stamped photo documentation prior to severe weather. This will help them file claims for damaged goods later.
- ❑ Routinely check vacant units to ensure all doors and windows are shut properly so the units remain closed and free of interior water damage.



Last-Minute Prep

When the National Weather Service declares a **severe thunderstorm watch** for your area, prepare your community through key communication with residents and building preparation.

- ❑ Redistribute important contact information.
- ❑ Update social media platforms.
- ❑ Let residents know the best way to submit maintenance requests. Also provide ongoing information on the status of repairs.
- ❑ Encourage residents who are parked on lower levels or in potential flood areas to move vehicles to higher ground.
- ❑ Ask residents to bring items on balconies inside.
- ❑ Remind tenants to shut all windows and interior and exterior doors to reduce pressure increases inside the building and to minimize the risk of water intrusion.
- ❑ Verify doors and windows in vacant units are shut properly.
- ❑ If your property has private car garages, ensure all residents close them prior to the storm.

- ❑ Notify residents of temporary closure of amenities such as pools, fitness centers, laundry facilities, and trash receptacle areas.
- ❑ Prepare amenity/community areas: stack chairs, close umbrellas, secure planter pots, and grills; turn off propane tanks; and properly secure gates/access points.



- ❑ Prepare trash receptacle areas by shutting and locking garbage bins and ensuring all enclosure gates are locked during the storm.

