GUIDELINES FOR DELAY, CANCELLATION, OR DISRUPTION OF EVENTS DUE TO SEVERE WEATHER OR NATURAL DISASTER

Be Aware—Be Prepared—Get Organized

USPC does not have a specific set of guidelines for cancellation or delay of events/activities due to all of the different geographic areas, and potential weather issues across the country. Therefore, it is recommended that the regional and local organizers are in the best position to make decisions regarding the cancellation or delay of events/activities.

Above all, USPC expects its leaders, organizers, and members to follow local and state government guidelines in the event specific or pending inclement weather, natural disaster, or accident is forecast or occurs during an event/activity. The safety of our members, volunteers, and mounts is of utmost importance, therefore in the absence of government direction or guidelines, the Safety Committee would like to take this opportunity to present these tips and resources to aid in determining what steps to take.

Before Events/Meetings:

- Be aware of
  - Potential weather or natural disasters that occur in your area.
  - Possible conditions that may influence transportation.
- Potential heat or cold related illness at outside meetings in the summer or winter requires awareness of the potential for heat or cold related illness. **Don't be afraid to cancel a meeting or event if the weather conditions are worrisome**.
- Check the weather forecast.
- Check the batteries on your weather radio.
- Communicate and post a copy of the severe weather plan at the beginning of the event/meeting.
- Be prepared to act when weather hits **during events/meetings.**

During Events/Meetings:

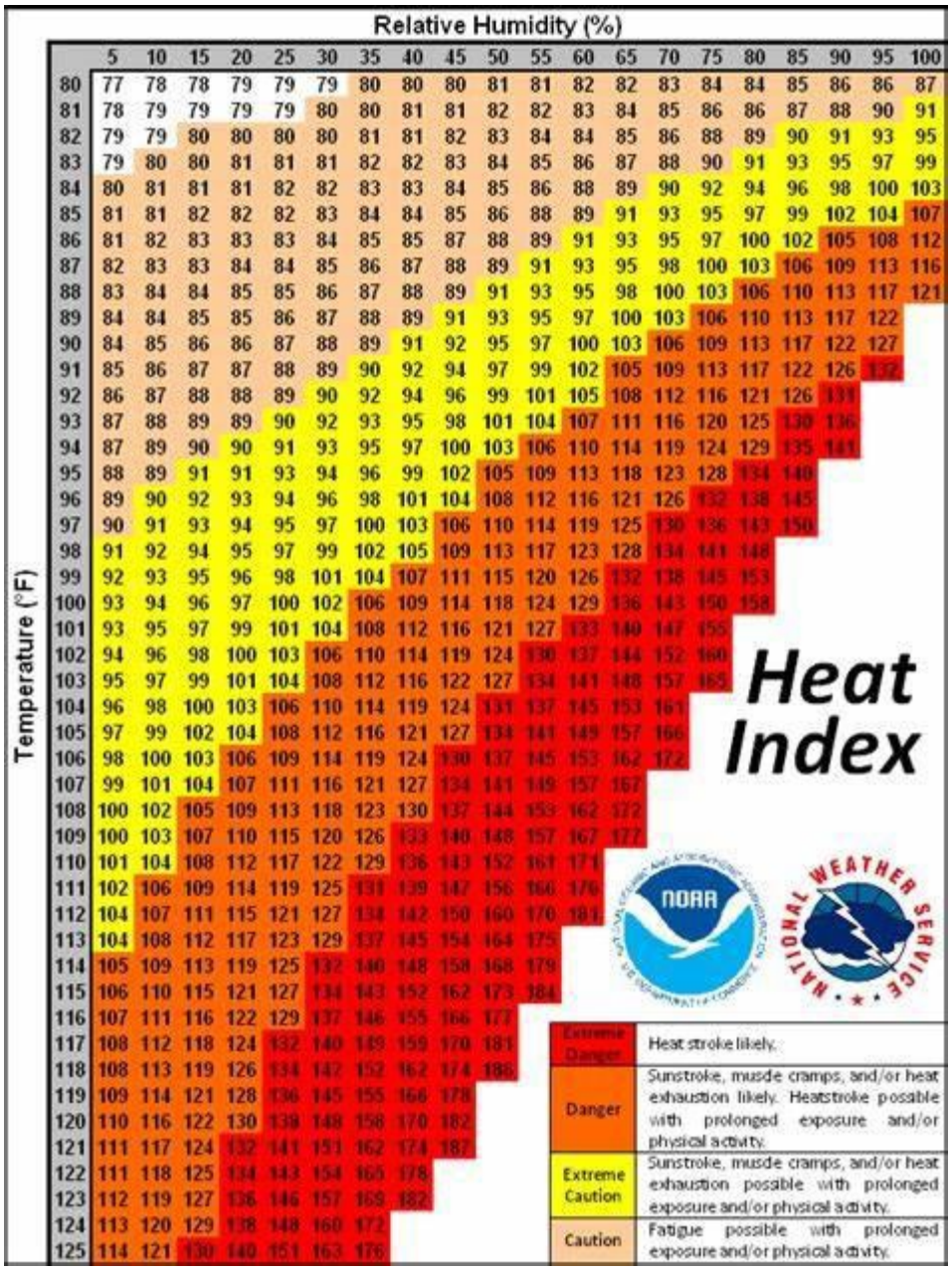
- Follow your severe weather plan.
- Communicate to all participants the progress of weather and what the severe weather plan calls for next.
- Do not call the "all clear" until the weather has completely passed your area.

After Events/Meetings when the Severe Weather Plan was used:

- Evaluate effectiveness and revise the plan.

Guidelines for Extreme Heat:

- See the National Weather Service Heat Index Chart below or use the Heat Index Calculator which can be found at http://www.wpc.ncep.noaa.gov /html/heatindex.shtml.
- If the Heat Index is in the peach zone proceed with caution.
- If the Heat Index is in the yellow zone proceed with extreme caution and consider canceling or delaying the event/meeting until a cooler part of the day.
- If the Heat Index is in the orange or red zones it is recommended that the event/meeting is canceled or delayed until a cooler part of the day.



- The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) also provides a Heat Safety Tool App which can be found at https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/heatstress/heatapp.html.

- If a person or an equine is acclimated to rising heat and humidity as they have conditioned for an activity, they can tolerate a higher heat index than a shaggy pony who is seeing the first hot day of spring. We should be ready to reduce the expectations of exertion and competition when the conditions we encounter are extreme for our mounts and participants.

- Some signs of horses in distress in heat include profuse sweating (or not sweating, a serious condition called anhidrosis), body temperature over 102 degrees Fahrenheit, elevated pulse and respiration, panting (fast, shallow respirations), and stumbling. Any of these are reasons to give emergency aid to the mount.

The following Air Temperature chart can be used as a guideline for working with our equine partners:

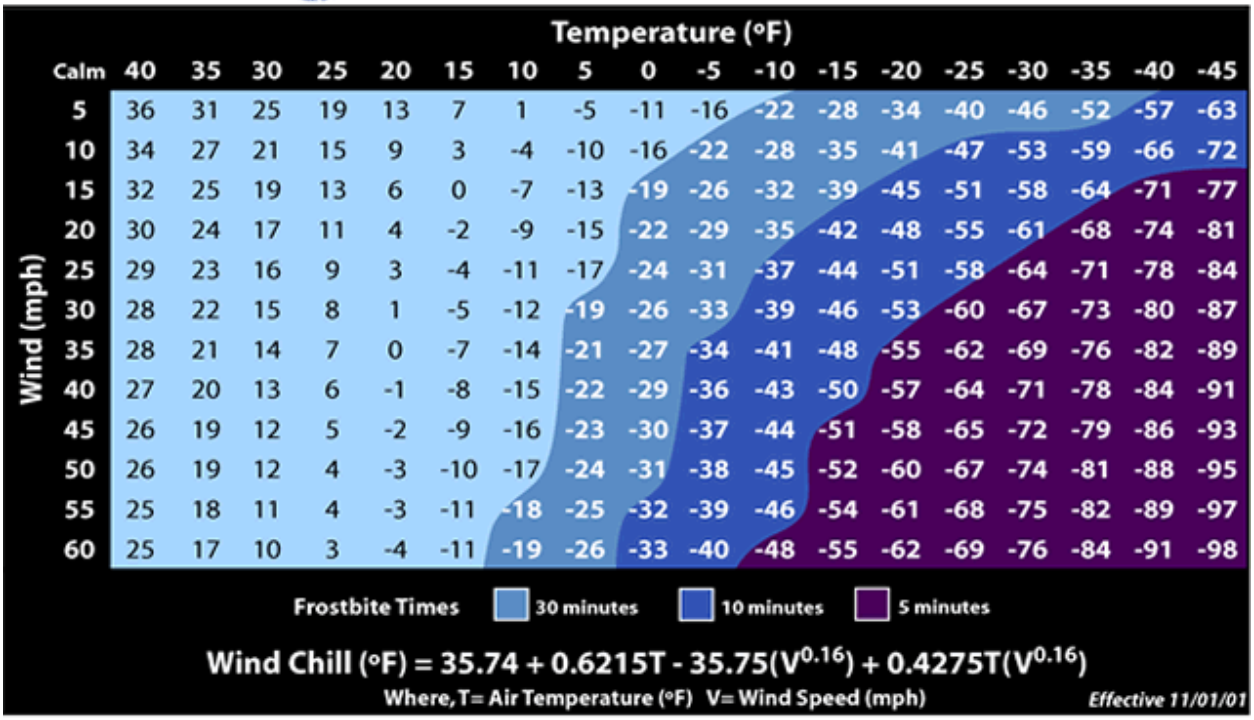
If Air Temp °F + % Relative Humidity =

120 or less	Your horse's cooling system is functioning very effectively. You are safe to do all the riding and training you like with no real worries.
120-150	Cooling efficiency is decreasing through this range. Horses will sweat up with work, so make sure they have a chance to rest and cool off over the course of a long ride or heavy work.
150-180	A horse's ability to regulate its temperature is greatly reduced and heat stress is more likely, so be careful. Stick with light work and keep watch for signs of overheating. Make sure to cool your horse down properly afterwards.
180 or more	Your horse has lost the ability to regulate its temperature. Over-working a horse in these conditions can be dangerous, even fatal. Do your horse (and yourself) a favor and take the day off!!

Guidelines for Extreme Cold:

- See the National Weather Service Wind Chill Chart below.
  - ➢ If the Wind Chill Temperature Index is in the light blue zone, proceed with caution and limit exposure to the elements.
  - ➢ If the Wind Chill Temperature Index is in the medium blue, dark blue, or purple zone it is recommended that the event/meeting is canceled or delayed until a warmer part of the day.
- Studies have shown that horses' lungs can be damaged during strenuous exercise in cold temperatures.

Wind Chill Chart



Wind (mph) \ Temperature (°F)	Calm	40	35	30	25	20	15	10	5	0	-5	-10	-15	-20	-25	-30	-35	-40	-45
5		36	31	25	19	13	7	1	-5	-11	-16	-22	-28	-34	-40	-46	-52	-57	-63
10		34	27	21	15	9	3	-4	-10	-16	-22	-28	-35	-41	-47	-53	-59	-66	-72
15		32	25	19	13	6	0	-7	-13	-19	-26	-32	-39	-45	-51	-58	-64	-71	-77
20		30	24	17	11	4	-2	-9	-15	-22	-29	-35	-42	-48	-55	-61	-68	-74	-81
25		29	23	16	9	3	-4	-11	-17	-24	-31	-37	-44	-51	-58	-64	-71	-78	-84
30		28	22	15	8	1	-5	-12	-19	-26	-33	-39	-46	-53	-60	-67	-73	-80	-87
35		28	21	14	7	0	-7	-14	-21	-27	-34	-41	-48	-55	-62	-69	-76	-82	-89
40		27	20	13	6	-1	-8	-15	-22	-29	-36	-43	-50	-57	-64	-71	-78	-84	-91
45		26	19	12	5	-2	-9	-16	-23	-30	-37	-44	-51	-58	-65	-72	-79	-86	-93
50		26	19	12	4	-3	-10	-17	-24	-31	-38	-45	-52	-60	-67	-74	-81	-88	-95
55		25	18	11	4	-3	-11	-18	-25	-32	-39	-46	-54	-61	-68	-75	-82	-89	-97
60		25	17	10	3	-4	-11	-19	-26	-33	-40	-48	-55	-62	-69	-76	-84	-91	-98

Frostbite Times: 30 minutes | 10 minutes | 5 minutes

$$\text{Wind Chill (°F)} = 35.74 + 0.6215T - 35.75(V^{0.16}) + 0.4275T(V^{0.16})$$

Where, T = Air Temperature (°F) V = Wind Speed (mph)

Effective 11/01/01

- There is clear research supporting when equine respiratory tissue is damaged by cold temperatures. We have to make the determination that turbulent air (the act of breathing hard) at 15 degrees Fahrenheit causes damage to the lining of the airways from the nostrils to air-exchanging alveoli deep in the lungs. Fifteen degrees is uncomfortable for people too, so it is recommended to drop exercise to a walk or not ride at 15 degrees or lower.

Guidelines for Poor Air Quality:

- See the United States Environmental Protection Agency Air Quality Index (AQI) below.
  - ➢ If the AQI is in the yellow or orange zone, inform participants that those with a sensitivity may be at risk, those in charge should make accommodations for those who identify that they have a sensitivity. Proceed with caution and consider limiting the level and duration of exercise.
  - ➢ If the AQI is in the red zone proceed with extreme caution and reduce the level and duration of exercise.
  - ➢ If the AQI is in the purple or maroon zone it is recommended that the event/meeting is canceled or delayed until a time of day with improved AQI.

Air Quality Index		
AQI Category and Color	**Index Value**	**Description of Air Quality**
Good **Green**	0 to 50	Air quality is satisfactory, and air pollution poses little or no risk.
Moderate **Yellow**	51 to 100	Air quality is acceptable. However, there may be a risk for some people, particularly those who are unusually sensitive to air pollution.
Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups **Orange**	101 to 150	Members of sensitive groups may experience health effects. The general public is less likely to be affected.
Unhealthy **Red**	151 to 200	Some members of the general public may experience health effects; members of sensitive groups may experience more serious health effects.
Very Unhealthy **Purple**	201 to 300	Health alert: The risk of health effects is increased for everyone.
Hazardous **Maroon**	301 and higher	Health warning of emergency conditions: everyone is more likely to be affected.

- Air quality is another stress on our horses, just as it is on people. Horses respond to irritants and particulates in their airways by coating the breathing surfaces with mucus. The downside of the protective mucus production is if the irritation continues the horse's body makes more mucus-producing cells and can respond faster and with more mucus every time an irritating situation occurs. Once they make more cells, they never lose them. This is the mechanism of heaves (Recurrent Airway Obstructive, sometimes called Equine Asthma). This physiologic response of the horse is why we need to protect them from smoke, smog, dust, pollen, mold, fungi, and even cold. When air quality is poor for humans, take precautions for your equine partners as best you can.

Resources:

- Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA):
- Department of Homeland Security: www.dhs.gov
- American Red Cross: www.redcross.org
- Your State Department of Transportation

  United States Environmental Protection Agency http://airnow.gov
- National Weather Service https://www.weather.gov/
- National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health https://www.cdc.gov/niosh
- USPC Rally Organizers Resources https://www.ponyclub.org/Members/Rulebooks.aspx
- USPC Rulebooks- Uniform Officiation Rules https://www.ponyclub.org/Members/Rulebooks.aspx
- USPC Safety Handbook https://www.ponyclub.org/Volunteers/Safety/
- USPC C Level Manual pages 237-239