

Preparing for El Niño

Event planners should prepare for impacts

El Niño events can directly and indirectly impact the weather pattern across the United States. The impacts of El Niño are typically largest in the U.S. during the cool months from October through May. Sac State event planners are encouraged to prepare early, establish contingency plans, and monitor changing conditions.

UNDERSTAND THE IMPACTS

Concerns that may postpone, cancel, or halt events include the forecast or anticipation of:



- Lightning within eight (8) miles of the event
- High winds
- Hail of any size
- Extreme temperatures, such as heat
- Precipitation causing flood concerns
- Wildfire smoke for outdoor events

MONITOR THE CONDITIONS

Be sure to monitor weather reports and air quality leading up to and throughout the event. Useful resources include:



- [National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration \(NOAA\)](https://www.noaa.gov/)
- [Air Quality Forecast airquality.weather.gov](https://airquality.weather.gov/)
- Sac State's [Purple Air monitors](#) for current air quality
- Sac State's [weather station dashboard](#)

KNOW YOUR THRESHOLDS

Event planning teams should establish when inclement weather would prevent an event from safely happening. Consider:



- When to cancel or stop an event
- Who has the authority
- What safety messaging can be prepared in advance

Sac State Event Planners Workgroup

https://www.csus.edu/president/university-events/SSEP_Teams_Channel

Sac State Event Planners (SSEP) Workgroup is a working group of event planners and stakeholders meeting monthly during the academic semester to offer webinars, training, and open forums to share best practices, address challenges, and celebrate successes in planning university events.

HAVE A PLAN

EXTREME HEAT

People have died or suffered serious health problems from extreme heat conditions. Heat illness can be prevented. Prepare for shade, provide access to water, allow heat breaks, have a cooling center, etc...

RAIN

Be prepared to take additional precaution when rain reaches 0.30 inches or more per hour or cumulative precipitation reaches 1 inch or more over an eight-hour period. Water intrusion of buildings or flooding of location and streets may occur.

Wind

Weather precautions may be necessary when high winds sustained at 20 mph or gusts of 30 mph for temporary or inflatable structures. Additional tie downs and weights may be needed to be rented. Staking may not be allowed as property damage could occur.

Lightning

Confirmed lightning strike within 20 miles of an event may trigger additional safety recommendations. Consider the following guidelines:

- 15 miles: Announce a "heads up" alert
 - 10 miles: Begin safety procedures (evacuate to the nearest building)
 - 8 miles: Event is in danger; complete safety procedures (everyone should be indoors)
- Sports related events may have their own rules to follow.



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For more information or assistance with your plan, please contact Janie Mutchler, Emergency Manager, at xiong@csus.edu.