



West Virginia Strawberry Festival Safety

Buckhannon, West Virginia

Weather in May

Avg. High: 74 F

Avg. Low: 53 F

Avg. Rain: 3.7 in

The safety of participants and attendees of the West Virginia Strawberry Festival is paramount.

Inclement weather may occasionally delay activities, but every effort will be made to produce events and parades unless safety margins cannot be met.

In the event of severe weather, warnings and instructions are included below, and can be accessed via the [WV Strawberry Festival Website](#), or on the following Facebook pages: [Buckhannon Fire Department](#), [Buckhannon VIPS](#), [Upshur County CERT](#), [Upshur County EMS](#), and [Upshur County DHSEM](#).

You may also sign up to receive text alerts by texting UpshurCoWVAAlerts to 69310.

Watches, Warnings & What To Do

If severe weather develops or has the potential to develop, the National Weather Service will issue a watch or warning based on an approaching storm's potential or current strength.

Severe Thunderstorm Watch / Tornado Watch

A Severe Thunderstorm Watch is issued when conditions are favorable for the development of severe thunderstorms in and close to the watch area. A severe thunderstorm by definition is a thunderstorm that produces 1-inch hail or larger in diameter and/or winds equal or exceeding 58 miles per hour. A Tornado Watch is issued when conditions are favorable for the development of tornadoes in and close to the watch area.

The size of a severe thunderstorm or tornado watch can vary depending on the weather situation, and is usually issued for a duration of 4 to 8 hours. A watch is normally issued well in advance of the actual occurrence of severe weather. During the watch, people should review severe thunderstorm safety rules and be prepared to move to a place of safety if threatening weather approaches.

- Secure items that could be blown away in high winds.
- Continue to monitor weather for any changes or additional alerts.
- If you are enjoying festivities within a canopy, please remove the canopy or ensure it is properly secured.

Severe Thunderstorm Warning

Seek safe shelter immediately. A Severe Thunderstorm Warning is issued when either a severe thunderstorm is indicated by radar or a spotter reports a thunderstorm producing hail 1 inch or larger in diameter and/or winds equal or exceed 58 miles per hour. Severe thunderstorms can produce tornadoes with little or no advance warning. The warning is usually issued for a duration of one hour, and can be issued without a Severe Thunderstorm Watch being already in effect.

- If you are on festival grounds (parade route, carnival, event grounds), seek shelter in a sturdy building or vehicle.
 - If you are in your vehicle, crouch below the window line and turn the engine on. This will allow the vehicle's airbags to be deployed.

Lightning

Parades and carnival may experience delays based on lightning proximity. Lightning activity will be monitored for the surrounding area during festival week. If necessary, Parades could be delayed, pending to resume thirty minutes following the most recent strike detected. Severe or extended lightning delays could result in parade cancellation and/or evacuation of the area.

Tornado Warning

Seek safe shelter immediately. A Tornado Warning is issued when a tornado is indicated by the radar or sighted by spotters. It can be issued without a Tornado Watch being already in effect, and is usually issued for a duration of around 30 minutes. The warning will include where the tornado was located and what towns will be in its path. If the thunderstorm which is causing the tornado is also producing torrential rains, a separate Flash Flood Warning would be issued if applicable.

- Find a sturdy building to seek shelter, or seek shelter in your vehicle. Do NOT seek shelter under a frame tent or in a camper.
 - If you are in your vehicle, crouch below the window line and turn the engine on. This will allow the vehicle's airbags to be deployed.
- If shelter or a vehicle is not available, find a low spot away from trees, fences, and poles, but make sure the spot is not prone to flash flooding.
 - If you cannot avoid trees, try to stay in the area of shorter trees.
 - Cover your head with your hands and lie face down on the ground.

Flood Warning

A Flood Warning is issued when the hazardous weather event is imminent or already happening. A Flood Warning is issued when flooding is imminent or occurring.

- Do not walk, swim, or drive through flood waters. Turn around, don't drown.
- Six inches of moving water can knock you down, one foot of moving water can sweep your vehicle away.
- Stay off bridges over fast moving water.
- Determine how to best protect yourself based on the type of flooding.
- Find higher ground and relocate safely.
- Evacuate if instructed to do so.

Heat Safety

A Heat Wave usually consists of high temperatures and high relative humidity. This combination makes it difficult for the human body to eliminate heat through the skin and sweat glands. Sweating will not cool the human body unless the water is removed by evaporation. High relative humidity consequently inhibits evaporation. Certain medications can also make it difficult for a person to sweat.

Symptoms of heat-related illness and what to do:

- Heat Cramps- Cramps or muscle spasms in the abdomen, arms or legs. *Solution:* Stop activity, cool down and drink clear juice or sports drink.
- Heat Exhaustion- Heavy sweating, paleness, muscle cramps, weakness, dizziness, headache, nausea, fainting. *Solution:* Cool down; seek medical attention if person has heart problems or high blood pressure.
- Heat Stroke- Extremely high body temperature, red, hot, dry skin, rapid pulse, throbbing headache, dizziness, nausea, confusion, unconsciousness. *Solution:* Call 911 and cool the victim with shower or hose until help arrives.

What you and your family/group can do:

- Slow down.
- Dress for summer (wear lightweight light-colored clothing).
- **Drink plenty of water.**
- Stay out of the sun as much as possible (sunburn makes it more difficult to cool off).

The end of the parade route will have a cooling station, as well as water and emergency medical technicians. Throughout the week, you will find emergency medical staff and firefighters staged and patrolling main street and parade routes.

Missing/lost Children

The West Virginia Strawberry Festival Headquarters located at [16 S Kanawha St Buckhannon, WV 26201](#) works as a central location for missing or lost children. The West Virginia Strawberry Festival operates in coordination with local emergency services for search and/or rescue operations.

Preparation

Lighting, flooding rains, large hail, and severe winds can turn a fun afternoon at the park or campground into a dangerous situation. If unprepared, a fast-approaching storm can become deadly. It's important

that you and your family understand what to do if a storm approaches. Know the answers to these questions:

- What county and city are you visiting?
- Where will you go if threatening weather is approaching?
- How will you find out if a storm is moving toward your area?
- How will you receive warnings and forecasts before the storm strikes?
- Where can you and your family meet if separated?

Other Emergencies

The West Virginia Strawberry Festival works in conjunction with local emergency services to ensure the safety of all participants and spectators. Any questions can be answered by calling West Virginia Strawberry Festival Headquarters at (304) 472-9036. If you are experiencing an emergency, please **dial 911**.