

# **NEWS**

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## **Leon County Schools Increase Safety for Students and Staff with SkyGuard® Service from AccuWeather**

*SkyGuard Weather Risk Management Service to Provide District-Specific Weather Warnings*

**STATE COLLEGE, Pa. – August 30, 2007** – Leon County School District, located in northern Florida, is taking a proactive stance to protect children and staff members from hazardous weather with AccuWeather’s SkyGuard® warning service. Located in the state with the highest incidence of lightning-associated fatalities and the most hurricane-related damage, the school district recognized the critical need for a reliable system that would allow them to proactively receive site-specific weather warnings for each campus.

“We can provide safety and security on a whole new level with SkyGuard’s weather predictions, advance warnings and expert advice,” said Robert Tricquet, Leon County School Department of Safety and Security, speaking of SkyGuard’s accurate, advance warnings and around-the-clock consultation service.

The SkyGuard service provides Leon County Schools with warnings for each campus – detailing cloud-to-ground lightning within 10 miles, tornadoes within five miles and winds of 50 miles per hour or greater – all with 20 minutes advance notice. One of the main attractions for the district was that SkyGuard provides lightning warnings up to 30 minutes in advance of the first strike. Other systems provided lightning detection, which sound warnings only after the first strike has occurred – a safety risk not worth taking when dozens of students could be in jeopardy during outdoor activities.

“SkyGuard delivers real-time predictions, not just detection reports,” said John Hunkair, Leon County Schools Director of Safety and Security. This valuable information has a variety of applications, from keeping children safe from the risk of lightning strikes at after-school activities to reducing the threat of high winds when traveling on school buses.

“Ensuring the safety and security of students is our top priority. Having systems and procedures in place to assist us with this effort is vital. Systems such as SkyGuard help our schools and staff keep students safe not only during school, but at after school events and activities. It is a valuable resource for our District,” stated Jackie Pons, Leon County Superintendent.

In fact, the school district saw the value in SkyGuard the first weekend of service during a county-wide football tournament. “To have all of the information in real-time was a major assistance in getting the function off without a hitch,” Tricquet said.

To maximize the effectiveness of SkyGuard, the district plans to work with AccuWeather to set up an IT system that will email warnings to principals, maintenance crews and coaches to increase not only safety but efficiency.

SkyGuard is a comprehensive weather risk management solution that aids businesses and organizations in optimizing their operations while simultaneously maximizing safety. SkyGuard delivers highly-detailed, site-specific forecast and warning information for each facility and each rail or highway mile that is pertinent to an organization’s activities, while at the same time monitoring and advising on critical thresholds such as temperature, precipitation, wind or lightning strikes.

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