

Avoidable Tragedies

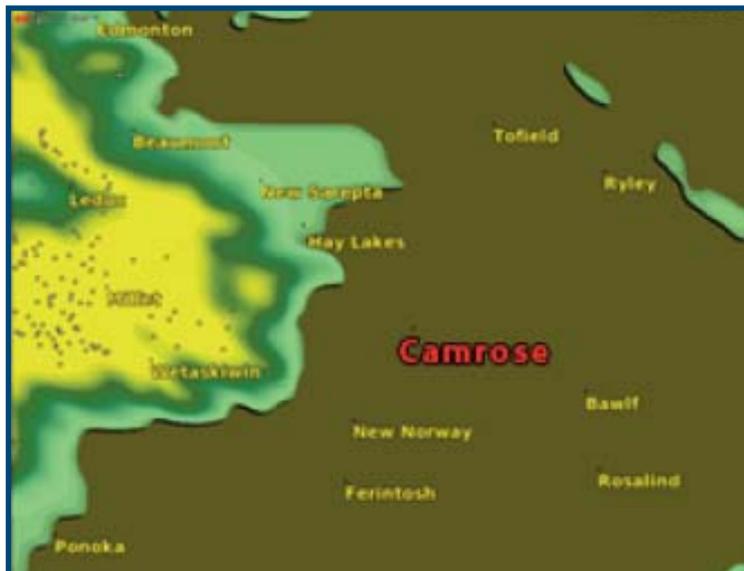
Outdoor stages collapse in France and Canada. Lightning kills a young man at an outdoor event in Kansas. Meanwhile, an unfortunate press release boasts of continuing the competition at an outdoor venue in Colorado "... with lightning ashes all around" So, it seems appropriate to revisit weather safety for outdoor events. For illustration, let's focus on one of these recent incidents.

The Camrose, Alberta stage collapse occurred at the Big Blue Valley Jamboree August 1 with one person killed and 75 injured. According to multiple news reports, the stage collapsed just ve minutes after organizers received a call that strong thunderstorms were on the way, leaving insucient time to react.

AccuWeather had been tracking that same storm for our client, Navistar, in nearby Edmonton. We provided 32 minutes advance warning to Navistar of 100km/hour (60 mph) wind gusts and cloud to ground lightning. We would have provided at least as much warning for the Camrose area.

These unfortunate events illustrate, once again, the vital nature of advance planning for emergency weather conditions whenever large numbers of people gather, whether indoors or out. By having a practiced plan, lives can be saved and injuries prevented. An essential element of the plan is having a dedicated weather partner specically focusing on your venue.

The technology and scientic expertise is available to minimize these tragedies. Call us today. We'll work with you to ensure successful, and weather-safe, events.



AccuWeather's SmartRAD® depicting the fatal storm approaching Camrose and the Jamboree. The dots are the location of cloud to ground lightning strikes.



The collapsed stage viewed through blowing dust raised by the high winds.

—Ed Kaiser Edmonton Journal

Here are some resources to help you plan for future storms:

Weather Safety Planning, by Michael R. Smith, Stadium Manager's Newsletter, 2008
<http://maildogmanager.com/page.html?p=000001XDDtjL188sAclwlkvzZ44AWkv1fM11iJBU+3>

Lightning Safety and Outdoor Stadiums, Gratz, Church and Noble, 2004,
<http://ams.confex.com/ams/pdfpapers/87191.pdf>

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