

Garden Tours & Severe Weather Procedures

April 9, 2026

Below is a refresher on Hillwood's severe weather procedures, along with guidance on what to expect when inclement conditions occur.

Severe Weather Monitoring & Communication

Garden tours take place rain or shine, except in cases of severe weather—such as lightning or thunderstorms—or during official advisories from the National Weather Service (e.g., excessive heat, high winds, or poor air quality). Hillwood staff closely monitors weather conditions and will determine if a tour needs to be shortened or canceled.

If a tour must be adjusted or canceled due to weather:

- **Final Decision:**
Volunteer Management staff will make the final call.
- **Notification:**
Docents scheduled for the affected tour will be notified by email. Whenever possible, decisions will be made by the end of the day prior to the tour, though morning-of updates may be necessary if conditions change.
- **Acknowledgment:**
Docents are asked to check their email and confirm receipt of any updates.

Responding to Sudden Storms

Because weather conditions can shift quickly, an unexpected storm may arise during a tour. If you hear thunder or see lightning, please guide your group indoors immediately. For safety, the National Weather Service recommends waiting at least 30 minutes after the last clap of thunder before resuming outdoor activities. As a reminder: *"When thunder roars, head indoors."* In such cases, tours may need to end early.

For visitors who wish to continue exploring once conditions improve, we encourage you to recommend Hillwood's immersive mobile audio tour, which includes a wonderful self-guided garden experience.

Questions?

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact:

Volunteer Department

volunteers@hillwoodmuseum.org
202.686.8528.

Thank you for your flexibility, dedication, and enthusiasm.