

How to Protect Your Dome In a Storm & What To Do In An Emergency



AIR-SUPPORTED STRUCTURES

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Have a dome emergency? Don't wait. Call our 24-hour emergency service hotline at 1-888-445-3223 now!

Every air-supported dome The Farley Group builds is precisely designed and engineered to withstand the worst the local climate is expected to throw at it.

But let's face it: **without good maintenance, a truly wicked storm can topple even the toughest of domes to the ground.**



And while many storm-damaged domes are quick to fix, the hit to your finances – not to mention the community's confidence – might not recover so quickly.

As we approach the summer thunderstorm season, we wanted to share a few important tips and reminders to help you keep your dome (and its occupants) as safe as possible.

Read on to learn about the most common warm weather issues your dome will face, how to prepare your dome for a storm, what to do in an emergency, and why even the best dome operators can run into problems.

Why Most Air-Supported Domes Withstand Fall & Summer Storms – But Some Don't

Picture this.

You wake up early on a muggy September morning to the sound of wind and rain pounding the window. Thunder growls in the distance, and your alarm clock is stuck, blinking, at 12:00 AM. You're not normally at the dome for another few hours...but you've had three texts and five missed calls from your head of operations within the last ten minutes.

“Power's out. Standby generator isn't working. Checking owner's manual...”

Uh oh.

You arrive on site just in time to see the dome – half deflated, shuddering in the wind – caught on a light pole near the perimeter. A tear erupts in the fabric membrane, and in seconds, the dome is flat on the ground.

What a nightmare!

There's a reason why we're telling you this horror story. It's a perfect storm of the two most common culprits behind dome emergencies: nasty weather and mechanical failure.

With over 30 years' experience servicing air structures, The Farley Group's Dome Service Technicians have seen it play out almost exactly like this scenario more than a few times.

Here's the thing...

While we can't speak for other manufacturers, we can tell you that each Farley dome is custom-designed and engineered to conform to local building codes and climatic conditions. A licensed engineer inspects and stamps each dome to ensure it meets the location's needs. Additionally, in especially windy areas, restraining cables will be included in the design to keep the dome secured.

What's more, all our air structure packages are equipped with an emergency standby system that automatically activates during a power outage. Driven by a generator, this system keeps the dome inflated until power is restored.

However, like any large structure, a dome must be inspected and serviced on a regular basis if it's going to perform to the high structural standards to which it was designed.

All the precautionary measures in the world won't help if they're not working as intended!

But here's the good news: there are straightforward steps you can take right now to make sure your dome is storm ready. And you don't have to wait until a storm's on the horizon to do it.

How to Prepare Your Dome For Wind and Thunder

First, be vigilant and check your local weather network regularly. Since you can't watch the forecast 24/7, consider using an app that sends [severe weather alert notifications](#) to your phone.

Routine maintenance and inspections are more important now than ever, especially if you're behind on things this year due to the lockdown. Now is the perfect time to review the [10-Point Dome Maintenance Checklist](#).

Above all, when a storm is on the way, take the necessary precautions to **protect your dome from potentially costly damage**.

- Refer to your owner's manual for the desired pressure setting based on predicted wind gusts in your area.
- Manually set your dome's pressure to the desired pressure setting until the storm passes through your area.
- Perform a standby test prior to the storm's arrival to ensure your back up system is functioning properly, as power outages are likely.
- Lower any light stands around the perimeter of the dome before major storms arrive, if applicable.
- Move any soccer nets, bleachers, or anything that can puncture the dome's membrane away from the membrane, as there will be dome movement during the high winds.

If you have any questions about preparing your dome for a storm, you can always reach out to us at info@thefarleygroup.com. We're here to help!

What to Do In A Dome Emergency

Unfortunately, it isn't always possible to prepare yourself for extreme weather. Some events, like [microbursts](#), can appear so suddenly and unexpectedly that you simply cannot see it coming.

When that happens, you need to act as quickly as possible.

If your dome is deflating, damaged, or at serious risk of damage, don't hesitate for a minute. The longer you "wait and see", the greater the risk your air structure could suffer costly damage! Take these steps immediately to minimize the fallout and keep everyone as safe as possible.

1. **Evacuate the dome immediately.** Ensure there are no patrons or employees inside the dome or in the surrounding vicinity. If you need help, call 911.
2. **Call our 24-hour dome emergency hotline (1-888-445-3223).** You will speak directly with an experienced Dome Service Technician who will take your call immediately or return your call within minutes. Don't second-guess whether you really have a true emergency, just call!
3. **Minimize the damage to your dome.** The Dome Service Technician will help you determine whether to handle a problem yourself, schedule dome service soon, or dispatch an emergency service team to your dome ASAP. If you need emergency service, the technician will walk you through any interim solutions or stop-gap measures you can use temporarily while help is on the way.

Playing It Safe

You know the steps you need to take to keep your dome and its components in good working order. You know what to do if there's a storm coming, and the immediate actions you must take to minimize damage and keep people safe if there is an emergency.

But there's one problem...

If you were around when your dome was first installed, you probably remember feeling the excitement – not to mention a certain amount of stress – that comes with running a brand-new air structure.

Newly minted dome owners tend to be on high alert for anything and everything that could possibly go wrong. Some of the people we work with call for help more times than we can count over the course of that first year!

However, once you've learned the ropes, it's easy to stop sweating the small stuff...and, occasionally, you may brush aside things that should be red flags. You might think, "Oh, that? It's been like that for a while" or "We'll wait and see if it keeps up."

Now, we don't mean to say that most dome operators are like this (and we know for a fact that you're not!) But if you spend a long time meeting and talking to other dome owners, you're bound to meet a few who are a bit 'relaxed' when it comes to maintenance.

Trouble is, there are many maintenance issues that simply should not be left well alone!

At The Farley Group, we encourage anyone who owns, operates, or manages a dome to have the entire structure inspected and serviced at least annually. Preventative maintenance will always save you bigger problems down the line!

The Farley Group can provide a detailed inspection of your dome, including climbing the roof of the structure. Our top priority (and yours), of course, is the dome's structural integrity and the safety of the people inside.

With over 30 years' experience servicing air structures, The Farley Group is the go-to service team for dome owners like you. Our professional service technicians have vast experience in all aspects of dome repairs and operations, from routine maintenance to full reconstruction.

[Reach out to us online](#) or call us at 1-888-445-3223 to schedule an inspection. Remember, we're here to help. Stay safe!

Throughout the process, The Farley Group is here to help along the way. You can research at your own pace in our [digital resource library](#), and when you're ready, reach out to us to discuss how to make your unique dome vision a reality.