

## **Lightning/Thunderstorms Policy & Procedures**

This policy is to be used in case of the threat of lightning or thunderstorms in regards to removal of athletes from the field and/or cancellation/delay of athletic contests. Every athletic team that holds practices/games outside shall use this policy.

### *Chain of Command/Roles of Staff*

- Athletic Trainer (Primary Decision Maker)
  1. Monitor storms via weather apps (Weatherbug, Accuweather, Wunderground, etc.).
  2. Initiate EAP
  3. Inform coaching staff & athletic director of suspension of play
- Athletic Director
  1. Monitor storms via weather apps (Weatherbug, Accuweather, Wunderground, etc.).
  2. Work with athletic trainer in decision-making, especially for scrimmages and games
- Coaching Staff
  1. Monitor storms via weather apps (Weatherbug, Accuweather, Wunderground, etc.).
  2. IF ATHLETIC TRAINER & ATHLETIC DIRECTOR ARE UNAVAILABLE, make decisions based on guidelines listed in EAP below

### *Suspension and Resumption of Athletic Activities*

- When thunder is heard or lightning is seen\*, the leading edge of the thunderstorm is close enough to strike your location with lightning. Suspend play for at least 30 minutes and vacate the outdoor activity to the previously designated safer location immediately.
- 30-minute rule. Once play has been suspended, wait at least 30 minutes after the last thunder is heard or lightning is witnessed\* prior to resuming play.
- Any subsequent thunder or lightning\* after the beginning of the 30-minute count will reset the clock and another 30-minute count should begin.
- When lightning-detection devices or mobile phone apps are available, this technology could be used to assist in deciding to suspend play if a lightning strike is noted to be within 10 miles of the event location. However, you should never depend on the reliability of these devices and, thus, hearing thunder or seeing lightning\* should always take precedence over information from a mobile app or lightning-detection device.

\* At night, under certain atmospheric conditions, lightning flashes may be seen from distant storms. In these cases, it may be safe to continue an event. If no

thunder can be heard and the flashes are low on the horizon, the storm may not pose a threat. Independently verified lightning detection information would help eliminate any uncertainty.

### *Safe Shelter*

1. A substantial, fully enclosed buildings with wiring and plumbing, such as a school, field house, library, home, or similar habitable (eg, where people live and work) building.
  - a. Jamestown High School - main school building, preferably gym area
  - b. Lafayette High School - main school building, preferably gym area
  - c. Warhill High School - main school building, preferably gym area
  - d. Wanner Stadium - locker rooms (teams), concessions and/or ticket booth (staff). For events, fans evacuated to cars
  - e. Warhill Sports Complex - no acceptable buildings available
  - f. Cooley Field - locker rooms (teams), James Blair MS/Central Office (staff). For events, fans evacuated to cars
2. Fully enclosed metal vehicles such as school buses, cars, and vans are also safe locations for evacuation.

### *First Aid/EAP*

- CHECK THE SCENE FOR SAFETY: Active thunderstorms can pose an ongoing hazard to rescuers as well as spectators and sport participants. Rescuers and emergency personnel must ensure their own personal safety before venturing into the venue to provide aid
- Activate EMS
  - a. Move patient(s) carefully to a safer location, if needed.
  - b. Evaluate and treat for apnea (cessation of breathing) and absence of heartbeat (cardiac arrest).
  - c. Assess level of consciousness.
  - d. Evaluate and treat for the possibility of spinal injuries.
  - e. Evaluate and treat for hypothermia.
- CPR: Personnel responsible for the well-being of participants should maintain current cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and first-aid certifications.
- EMERGENCY EQUIPMENT RETRIEVAL: If an automated external defibrillator (AED) is available, it should be applied on anyone who appears to be unconscious, pulseless, or apneic. However, other first aid efforts and resuscitation should not be delayed while an AED is being located.