

S. ELECTRICAL STORMS/LIGHTNING

1. ATHLETICS LIGHTNING POLICY

- a. All Athletic Trainers and Event Management personnel have had their cell phones programmed into the Weather Sentry alert system. Text messages will be sent to all cell phones when lightning has occurred within thirty (30) to ten (10) miles or less of our field locations.
- b. When the text message is received, activity must stop and participants need to move to shelter. There is no discretion in this step. If the text message is received during a game, the Athletic Trainer or Event Manager (if both are present, the Event Manager takes the lead) must notify the head official of the warning and indicate that the field must be cleared until 30 minutes after the last text message (indicating lightning has occurred) has been received. Text messages are received as "Advisory" text (30 miles or less away) and as a "Warning" text (10 miles or less away).
- c. When Public Address systems are in use, an announcement should be made that the game is being halted and that fans should also seek shelter or leave the area.
- d. Play may resume after 30 minutes from the last time indicated on the last text message, and/or after receiving the "All Clear" text, that is received indicating lightning has occurred within ten (10) miles.
- e. If you witness lightning but don't receive the text message, follow the policy as if you did (stop the activity.) If you witness lightning after receiving the message, restart your 30-minute count and/or wait for the "All Clear" text.
- f. If there is any doubt, common sense should prevail.
- g. For home Football games, follow the "Lightning Policy for Home Football Games".

2. LIGHTNING POLICY FOR HOME FOOTBALL GAMES

- a. The cell phones of Football Athletic Trainers, select Athletics Administrators, Event Managers and the Grounds Supervisor have been programmed into the Weather Sentry alert system for notification of lightning occurring within 30 to 10 miles or less of Delaware Stadium. Text messages will be sent to these cell phones.
- b. When the text message is received, the Athletic Director or his/her designee will meet the Grounds Supervisor in his/her office (NEZ building) to monitor the Weather

Sentry radar and lightning strike locations and will contact Public Safety in the Command Center to inform them of the potential need to clear the stadium.

c. If it appears that the lightning is moving in the direction of the stadium or additional alerts have been received, the following procedure will begin:

1) The Athletic Director will communicate with the President or his/her designee, the lightning situation as viewed on the Weather Sentry system for a decision about the clearing the fans from the stadium.

2) The Manager, Football Operations, will coordinate stopping the game with the officials when lightning is within five (5) miles.

3) The designated Athletics Administrator will call the Press Box to have "Lightning Announcement #1" read over the Public Address system, posted on the message center of the scoreboard, and relayed to the UD Athletics radio broadcaster.

4) If the President or his/her designee makes the decision to clear the stadium, the Athletic Director will call the Press Box to have "Lightning Announcement #2" read over the Public Address system, posted on the message center of the scoreboard, and relayed to the UD Athletics radio broadcaster. Public Safety will notify stadium personnel (via walkie-talkie) of the need to follow the stadium evacuation procedures. Ushers and Public Safety will assist with the evacuation.

5) If the game has been stopped (lightning within five (5) miles,) it cannot resume until the officials have been notified by the Manager, Football Operations that thirty (30) minutes have passed since the time of the last text message that he/she has received.

6) Fans may not return to their seats until thirty (30) minutes have passed since the time of the last text message received by the designated Athletics Administrator (who will notify the Athletic Director and the Press Box.) An announcement will be made indicating it is safe to return over the Public Address system and on the radio station that is broadcasting the game for UD Athletics.

LIGHTNING ANNOUNCEMENT #1

May I have your attention, please. A lightning storm is currently moving in the direction of the stadium. For your safety, you may wish to start moving calmly out of the stands toward shelter. Please go to your car or Kings Junior High and do not remain under the stands. The game is not being canceled, at this time. If we need to fully clear the stadium, we will notify you immediately. You will be permitted to re-enter the stadium when an announcement is made that it is safe for you to do so over the Public Address system. Thank you.

LIGHTNING ANNOUNCEMENT #2

Attention! A lightning storm is approaching our area. We need to clear the stadium. Please move to the nearest aisle and calmly exit the stadium. Seek shelter in your car or the Junior High School. Do not remain under the stands. The game will be halted soon. Thank you for your cooperation.



When there is Thunder Take Cover!!

Lightning often strikes outside the area of heavy rain and may strike as far as 10 miles from any rainfall. Many lightning deaths occur ahead of storms or after storms have seemingly passed.

If you can hear thunder, you are in danger. Don't be fooled by blue skies. If you hear thunder, lightning is close enough to pose an immediate threat.

Get to a safe place. If you hear thunder, even a distant rumble, immediately move to a safe place. Fully enclosed buildings with wiring and plumbing provide the best protection. Sheds, picnic shelters, tents or covered porches do NOT protect you from lightning. If a sturdy building is not nearby, get into a hard-topped metal vehicle and close all the windows. Stay inside until 30 minutes after the last rumble of thunder.

Safe Shelters

- Safe shelter is a substantial building or inside an enclosed, metal-topped vehicle.
- Stay in safe shelter at least 30 minutes after you hear the last clap of thunder.

Last Resort Outdoor Risk Reduction Tips

NO PLACE outside is safe when lightning is in the area, but if you are caught outside **with no safe shelter anywhere nearby** the following actions *may* reduce your risk:

- Immediately get off elevated areas such as hills, mountain ridges or peaks
- NEVER lie flat on the ground
- NEVER use a tree for shelter
- NEVER use a cliff or rocky overhang for shelter
- Immediately get out and away from ponds, lakes and other bodies of water
- Stay away from objects that conduct electricity (barbed wire fences, power lines, windmills, etc.)
- UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES should ANY of the above actions be taken if a building or an all-metal vehicle is nearby
- If you hear thunder, lightning is close enough to strike you.
- Avoid open areas. Don't be the tallest object in the area.
- Stay away from isolated tall trees, towers or utility poles. Lightning tends to strike the taller objects in an area.
- Stay away from metal conductors such as wires or fences. Metal does not attract lightning, but lightning can travel long distances through it.
- Stay off corded phones, computers and other electrical equipment that put you in direct contact with electricity.
- Avoid plumbing, including sinks, baths, and faucets.
- Stay away from windows and doors, and stay off porches.
- Do not lie on concrete floors, and do not lean against concrete walls.

Act Fast If Someone Is Struck by Lightning!

Lightning victims do not carry an electrical charge, are safe to touch, and need urgent medical attention. Cardiac arrest is the immediate cause of death for those who die. Some deaths can be prevented if the victim receives the proper first aid immediately.

Call for help. Call 9-1-1 or your local ambulance service.

Give first aid. Do not delay CPR if the person is unresponsive or not breathing. Use an Automatic External Defibrillator if one is available.

If possible, move the victim to a safer place. Lightning can strike twice. Don't become a victim.

All of this information is straight from the National Weather Service Website. Educate yourself even more by visiting <http://www.lightningsafety.noaa.gov/more.htm>

OHSAA Rules (General Sports Regulations 2010-2011)

LIGHTNING AND INCLEMENT WEATHER

Recognition

Coaches, athletic trainers, athletes, administrators and contest officials shall be educated regarding the signs indicating thunderstorm development. Since the average distance between successive lightning flashes is approximately two to three miles, ANYTIME that lightning can be seen or heard, the risk is already present. Weather can be monitored using the following methods:

- **Monitor Weather Patterns** – Be aware of potential thunderstorms by monitoring local weather forecasts the day before and morning of the competition, and by scanning the sky for signs of potential thunderstorm activity
- **National Weather Service** – Weather can also be monitored using small, portable weather radios from the NWS. The NWS uses a system of severe storm watches and warnings. A watch indicates conditions are favorable for severe weather to develop in an area; a warning indicates severe weather has been reported in an area, and everyone should take proper precautions. Any thunderstorm poses a risk of injury or death even if it does not meet the criteria for severe weather. Therefore, anytime thunderstorms are in the forecast (even if it is only a 20 percent chance), event organizers shall be at a heightened level of awareness to the potential danger of lightning.

Management

- **Evacuation** – If lightning is imminent or a thunderstorm is approaching, all personnel, athletes and spectators shall evacuate to available safe structures or shelters. A list of the closest safe structures should be announced and displayed on placards at all athletic venues.
- **Thirty-minute rule** – Competition or practice shall be suspended once lightning has been recognized or thunder is heard. It is required to wait at least 30 minutes after the last flash of lightning is witnessed or thunder is heard prior to resuming practice or competition. Given the average rates of thunderstorm travel, the storm should move 10-12 miles away from the area. This significantly reduces the risk of local lightning flashes. **Any subsequent lightning or thunder after the beginning of the 30-minute count shall reset the clock, and another count shall begin.**

<http://www.ohsaa.org/sports/rglts/GenSportsReg10-11.pdf>