



Lightning Protocol

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1.0 Introduction

Practice and training increase recreation performance. Similarly, preparedness can reduce the risk of the lightning hazard. Lightning is the most frequent weather hazard impacting athletics events. Baseball, football, lacrosse, skiing, swimming, soccer, tennis, track and field events...all these and other outdoor sports have been visited by lightning.

Education is the single most important means to achieve lightning safety. Heat Wave will implement the following lightning safety program at every facility for every event.

2.0 Lightning Safety Program

- Admin Staff will be designated to monitor weather conditions. Local weather forecasts – from The Weather channel, NOAA Weather Radio, or local TV stations – will be observed 24 hours prior to any Heat Wave events.
- **All outdoor activities shall be suspended when lightning is within 10 miles of a Heat Wave event location. No staff member shall have the authority to overturn this standard.**
- Suspension and resumption of all activities shall be planned in advance for each event location. Understanding of SAFE lightning shelters is essential. SAFE evacuation sites include:
 - Fully enclosed metal vehicles with windows up.
 - Substantial buildings.
 - The low ground. Seek cover in clumps of bushes.
 - Only if one of the two above sites are not available.
- Unsafe lightning shelter areas include all outdoor metal objects like flag poles, fences, gates, high mast light poles, metal bleachers, golf carts, machinery, etc. AVOID trees, water, open fields, and high ground.
- Lightning's distance is easy to estimate: if you hear thunder, it and the associated lightning are within auditory range...about 6-8 miles away. The distance from Strike A to Strike B also can be 6-8 miles. Different distances to shelter will determine different times to suspend activities. **If lightning is seen or thunder is heard, all Heat Wave personnel shall immediately end outdoor activities and seek shelter. Equipment shall be left behind if it would impede anyone's ability to quickly seek shelter.** A good lightning safety motto is: "If you can see it (lightning), flee it; if you can hear it (thunder), clear it."
- If you feel your hair standing on end, and/or hear "crackling noises" – you are in lightning's electric field. If caught outside during close-in lightning, immediately remove metal objects (including baseball cap), place your feet together, duck your head, and crouch down low in baseball catcher's stance with hands on knees.
- **All Heat Wave personnel shall wait a minimum of 30 minutes from the last observed lightning or thunder before resuming outdoor activities.** Admin staff will announce when it is safe to resume.
- People who have been struck by lightning do not carry an electrical charge and are safe to handle. Apply first aid immediately if you are qualified to do so and get emergency medical help promptly.