

Section IX Lightning and Thunder Policy

Prepared by the Section IX Safety Committee

- I. Purpose/Philosophy
The purpose of a lightning and thunder policy is to provide a safeguard for athletic contests, events and practices.
- II. Policy
The occurrence of lightning and thunder is NOT subject to interpretation nor debate. Lightning and thunder necessitates that contests, events or practices be immediately suspended.
- III. Procedures
 - A. Chain of command
 - 1. The chain of command at athletic events is defined as:
 - a. Superintendent of School
 - b. Principal/Building Administrator
 - c. Sport chairs or their designees
 - d. Athletic Coordinator
 - e. Host site athletic directors or their designees
 - f. Officials
 - g. Sponsoring Coach
 - h. Security Personnel
 - B. Sequential Response will include:
 - 1. Suspend play and direct participants to shelter in a public building or if building is unavailable, to a vehicle with a solid top.
 - 2. Monitor weather scanners/stations
 - 3. After lightning and thunder has passed, wait a full 30 minutes after the last lightning strike and/or sound of thunder before resuming play.
 - 4. Event suspension or evacuation procedures to be outlined during pre-event announcements.
 - C. Host school responsibilities will include:
 - 1. To make a pre-event announcement that notes rules, regulations and evacuation procedures.
 - 2. Announcement to be read: “All spectators, competitors, and personnel should go inside to the school building as quickly as possible. A vehicle with a metal roof and the windows rolled up is a safe alternative to a sturdy building. DO NOT take shelter under trees or other lone objects. DO NOT remain on, under, or near metal bleachers, fences, or backstops.”
 - 3. Authority to execute the sequential response shall be governed by the chain of command.
 - 4. Consideration to cancel or resume play must take into account a minimum 30 minute wait from the time of interruption. The rules of the sport will determine whether the contest is official or if the contest must resume at a later date.
 - 5. To plan for the occurrence of bad weather.
- IV. Communication of Lightning and Thunder Policy
 - A. Section workshops
 - B. League meetings
 - C. Preseason coaches meeting
 - D. Section IX heat clinics
 - E. Health Science and First Aid Update classes
 - F. Published plan sent to superintendents, principals, etc.
- V. Evaluations
 - A. Yearly

