

Fayetteville Public Schools Lightning Policy



OBJECTIVE:

The objective of this policy is to institute safeguards against the hazards of potential lightning risks.

The Fayetteville High School Sports Medicine Staff will monitor the weather/lightening using DTN/METEORLOGIX weather service (<http://weather.dtn.com>). This weather service provides real time radar and lightning activity in our area. It enables us to know exactly where and when lightning is present. It is accessible by computer or cell phone. If lightning is present within an eight-mile radius, athletic activity will be suspended and 30-30 Lightning Safety rule will be in effect.

30-30 Lightning Safety Rule --- Resumption of Play

Play can resume only when lightning and/or thunder has not been detected for 30 minutes. Every time lightning or thunder is detected, the 30-minute clock restarts. The “Flash-to-Bang” theory will also be used in conjunction with the DTN/METEORLOGIX service. This service will alert us when it is safe to return to the field.

How to Use “Flash-to-Bang”

Count the number of seconds from the time lightning is sighted to the time that the corresponding thunder is heard. Divide by 5 to obtain the distance from your location, in miles, that the lightning is occurring. Example: If an individual counts 15 seconds between seeing a flash of lightning and hearing the bang of thunder, $15/5 = 3$; therefore, the lightning flash is approximately 3 miles away. **Play is suspended if the Flash-to-Bang count is less than or equal to 40 seconds. This indicates that the lightning is within the 8-mile range.**

Chain of Command

Designate a chain of command as to who monitors threatening weather and who makes the decision to remove a team or individuals from an athletic site or event. This emergency plan includes planned instructions for participants and spectators.

The Certified Athletic Trainer will command the implementation of the lightning policy. The Certified Athletic Trainer can activate the safety plan by suspending an event.

The Certified Athletic Trainer assumes the responsibility as spokesperson to participating teams, school administrators, game officials and press box.

If the Head Coach of a sport is playing off campus and no Certified Athletic Trainer is present, the head coach will assume responsibility for the team. If you are the visiting team and you feel conditions have become unsafe for our athletes--- remove the athletes without approval from opposing team. **Any individuals, athletes or staff who feel he or she is in danger of lightning has the right to leave the field to seek safe shelter.**

Designate a Weather Watcher

The Sports Medicine Department will actively obtain weather reports the day of a game and during the event. This information will be shared within the department and the Certified Athletic Trainer will disseminate the information within the chain of command.

Define and List Safe Locations

A safe shelter is defined as: any building normally occupied or used by people, i.e. a building with plumbing and/or electrical wiring that acts to electrically ground the structure. Avoid using shower facilities for safe shelter and do not use showers or plumbing, or telephones during a thunderstorm. In absence of a sturdy, frequently inhabited building, any vehicle with a hard metal roof (not a convertible or golf cart) and rolled up windows will provide safe shelter, it is hard metal roofs that dissipates the lightning strike that protects you.

Some safe shelters at Fayetteville Public Schools

Primary Locations:

- **Harmon Field:** Fieldhouse, locker rooms, BARC
- **Baseball Complex:** Restrooms, Harmon Field Fieldhouse, BARC, cars
- **Lady Dawg Yard:** Restrooms, locker rooms
- **Tennis Complex:** Restrooms, locker rooms
- **FPS Track Complex:** Restrooms, locker rooms, cars, buses
- **Golf Course:** Clubhouse

Secondary Locations:

A vehicle is certainly better than remaining outdoors. It is not the rubber tires that makes a vehicle a safe shelter, but the hard metal roof, which dissipates the lightning strike around the vehicle (Do not touch the side of the car or steering wheel)

Additional Safety Precautions

Avoid being in or near high places and open fields, isolated trees, unprotected gazebos, rain or picnic shelters, baseball dugouts, communications towers, flagpoles, light poles, bleachers (metal or wood), metal fences, convertibles, golf carts.

First Aid

People who have been struck by lightning do not carry an electrical charge. Therefore, cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) is safe for the responder. If possible, an injured person should be moved to a safer location before starting CPR.

Lightning strike victims who show signs of cardiac or respiratory arrest need emergency help quickly. Prompt, aggressive CPR has been highly effective for the survival of victims of lightning strikes.

Public Address Announcement if Lightning Occurs:

Hazardous lightning has been monitored in the immediate area and this sporting event has been temporarily suspended. All team members have been advised to seek shelter in a safe location. This suspension will last a minimum of 30 minutes.

All spectators are advised to leave the stadium bleachers. Stadium seating is an unsafe location during a lightning storm. Your health is at risk by remaining in the bleachers during this lightning storm.