

Parks at Texas Star

LIGHTNING SAFETY POLICY

Background:

Lightning is one of the most consistent causes of weather-related deaths and injury in the U.S. According to the National Severe Storms Laboratory, there are approximately 1 00 lightning-related deaths and over 1000 injuries yearly

Lightning-related injuries mainly occur between May and September. Most lightning-related casualties happen between 10 a.m. and 7 p.m., with the majority of those occurring between 2 p.m. and 6 p.m. Therefore, the risk of lightning-related injury appears to be highest during some of the most active periods for outdoor athletic activities. The average distance between successive lightning flashes is about two to three miles, which means that risk is present WHENEVER lightning can be seen or thunder can be heard.

Section I: Responsibility of Facility Administrator

The **Facility Administrator** (Athletics Supervisor, Athletics Coordinator, PATS MOD or PATS Lead) will institute the implementation of the lightning policy. The **Facility Administrator** can activate the safety plan by suspending an event.

The **Facility Administrator** assumes the responsibility of informing all participants/teams, game officials and the general public of any threat of lightning.

Section II: Lightning Safety Rules

At the Sound of the lightening detection siren, the game or practice will immediately be stopped. All players, coaches, officials and spectators must take shelter in a **Safe Location**.

Section III: Define Safe Locations

Define safe locations for participants, game officials and the general public.

Primary Locations:

1. Any building normally occupied or frequently used by people.
Star Center

Example: Building with plumbing and/or electrical wiring that acts to electrically ground the structure.

Secondary Location:

1. In the absence of a sturdy, frequently inhabited building, any vehicle with a hard metal roof (not a convertible or golf cart) and rolled-up windows can provide a measure of safety.

A vehicle is certainly better than remaining outdoors. It is not the rubber tires that make a vehicle a safe shelter, but the hard metal roof, which dissipates the lightning strike around the vehicle.

DO NOT TOUCH THE SIDES OF THE VEHICLE

Avoid being in or near:

High places and open fields, isolated trees, unprotected gazebos, rain or picnic shelters, **baseball dugouts**, communication towers, flagpoles, light poles, bleachers(metal or wood), metal fences, convertibles, golf carts or water.

When inside a building, avoid:

The use of a telephone, washing your hands, doing dishes or any contact with conductive surfaces with exposure to the outside such as metal door or window frames, electrical wiring, telephone wiring, cable TV wiring or plumbing.

Section IV: Return to Play: All Clear

Lightening Detection Siren Suspension of play

Once the lightening detector siren goes off play will be suspended. The detector will send another ALL CLEAR signal when it is safe to resume play.

Resumption of play can continue only when lightning has **not** been detected for 30 minutes (this means that a delay due to lightning will last a **minimum** of 30 minutes). Every time lightning is detected within the 30 minutes, **THE CLOCK RESTARTS.**

The Facility Administrator will determine when to postpone games and they will be rescheduled at a later date.

Evidence of blue sky in the local area, or lack of rainfall are not adequate reasons to breach the thirty minute return to play rule. Lightning can strike far from where it is raining, even when the clouds begin to clear and show evidence of blue sky.

You can monitor the system by clicking on the following link:

<https://www.parksattexasstar.com/facilities/field-conditions>

When the siren is activated this indicates the lightning is at the 6-mile range.

These policies must be strictly enforced and followed at all times!