

Lightning Guidelines

Weather conditions need to be monitored closely in an approaching storm. As a general rule, if one can hear thunder or see lightning, all outdoor activities need to be moved indoors or cancelled.

Prevention and education are the keys to lightning safety. The athletic trainer, head coach and/or administrator using one of the four following methods will monitor weather conditions.

- **THOR GUARD LIGHTNING PREDICTION SYSTEM**, which sounds ONE 15 second blast of a horn signaling suspension of all activities. If you are within visibility of system, the strobe light on top of system will begin flashing and remain flashing until safe conditions return. You may resume activities only after THREE 5 second blasts of the horn are sounded and the strobe light stops flashing. *Thor Guard is the official device used at Hardin and Farris complexes.*
- **WEATHERBUG** via smartphones. This has a component called Spark which also tracks lightning based on the location of the user. It makes it very useful for our coaching/athletic training staff because it goes by current location. When using the WeatherBug, it will indicate by turning red, when a **10 mile** radius is considered unsafe. You must seek shelter immediately!
- **FLASH TO BANG** method to monitor lightning for evacuation of the playing field for a safer environment. With the “Flash to bang” method the seconds are counted from the time a flash of lightning is seen until a clap of thunder is heard. When this number is 30 seconds or less, evacuation of the field should be under way. Lightning awareness should begin with the first flash of lightning seen or thunder clap heard.
- **SKY-SCAN** is a small battery operated lightning detection device that estimates the distance of lightning. Sky-Scan should be used in conjunction with other methods. The unit must be turned on and be powered by a good 9-volt battery and be pointed toward the storm clouds. The display lights up with a range in miles of the last strike detected. All NISD training staffs have a lightning meter for use at athletic events and practices.

Evacuation Procedures

The students should be evacuated to a safe shelter. Staying away from tall or individual trees, lone objects (light or flag poles), metal objects, and open fields. Examples of safe shelter are a bus, dressing room, or other building. A dug out or awning are not considered safe shelter. Administrators should evacuate spectators from the stadium.

Resume Practice and Competition

Once a game or practice has been suspended the storm should continue to be monitored. No contest or practice should be resumed until:

THOR GUARD - You may resume activities only after THREE 5 second blasts of the horn are sounded and the strobe light stops flashing.

WEATHERBUG - When the last strike is outside a 10 mile radius.

FLASH TO BANG - No lightning strike has been detected for 30 consecutive minutes following the last sound of thunder or lightning flash.

SKY-SCAN - No lightning strike has been detected within 3-8 mile range for 30 consecutive minutes using the Sky-Scan.

IF YOU REMAIN OUTDOORS AFTER THE WARNING IS ISSUED, YOU DO SO AT YOUR OWN RISK AND SUBJECT ALL STUDENTS IN YOUR CARE TO DANGER!!!

*Postpone or suspend activity if a thunderstorm appears imminent before or during an activity or contest (irrespective of whether lightning is seen or thunder is heard) until the hazard has passed. Signs of imminent thunderstorm activity are darkening clouds, high winds, and thunder or lightning activity.

