



Thunder and Lightning Policy and Procedures

You do not have to see lightning to be in danger; if you can hear thunder then there is a very real possibility of a lightning strike. Lightning can strike quickly and unexpectedly, and it can be deadly. Lightning often strikes as far as 8 miles away from any rainfall. Many deaths from lightning occur ahead of the storm because people try and wait to the last minute before seeking shelter. The safety of our players, families, and staff is the number one priority. **OBEY ALL POLICIES IN PLACE AT ANY COMPLEX, FIELD, PARK, FACILITY AND/OR EVENT.**

Rule: In compliance with ASA, if there is a lightning strike within 8 miles of the fields (game or practice venue), players, coaches, spectators, and game officials must immediately vacate the field to their cars and/or a safe **enclosed** structure. Don't wait for rain. Coaches must remain with players until they are safely placed with parents or guardians. Coaches are responsible for ensuring the safety of all players on the field.

It is **strongly** advised that coaches download a **lightning detection app** to make the most accurate and informed decision. There are many free apps available. Some of the most popular are WeatherBug or Lightning Finder. Again, if a lightning strike has been recorded within 8 miles of your current location, you must remove your players from the field.

- Keep an eye on the sky. Look for darkening skies, flashes of lightning, or increasing wind, which may be signs of an approaching thunderstorm. Listen for the sound of thunder. If you can hear thunder, go to a safe shelter immediately. Again, don't wait for rain.
- If you see or hear a thunderstorm coming or your hair stands on end, immediately suspend your game or practice.
- When it is observed that there has been a lightning strike within 8 miles of a training session or game, the field must remain cleared for 30 minutes or more without any further strikes within the 8 mile radius.
- The 30 minute delay in training sessions or games will restart every time lightning strikes within the 8 mile radius.
- Clear blue sky does not ensure the area is safe to resume practice and games. Coaches should verify with a lightning detection app (such as Weatherbug) that it is safe to return to the fields.

Once lightning is detected:

- Stay away from metal including fencing, bleachers, flagpoles, sheds, goals.
- Avoid high places, open areas, overhead wires and power lines, cell phones, isolated trees, picnic shelters, golf carts, metal structures, or any type of standing water.

All individuals have the right to leave a site or activity, without fear of repercussion or penalty, in order to seek a safe structure or location if they feel they are in danger from impending lightning activity.

Anyone not following these guidelines and remaining outdoors or in an inappropriate area or shelter will do so at their own risk.

People who have been struck by lightning do not carry an electrical charge and are safe to approach and handle.

Apply first aid immediately if you are qualified to do so. **Call 9-1-1.** Check for burns in two places; and entrance and exit wound. The injured person has received an electric shock and may be burned. Being struck by lightning can also cause nervous system damage, broken bones, and loss of hearing or eyesight.