

DSYSA Soccer – Weather/Lightning Policy

In the event of inclement weather and/or lightning, the guidelines below shall be followed during DSYSA Soccer sanctioned events:

COACHES and PARENTS: If you, or your child, are set to participate in a training session (practice) or a game, please be mindful of the current weather conditions and also check the field status on the DSYSA Soccer Website prior to your departure to the DSYSA Soccer Complex. <http://dsyasoccer.sportslinkii.com>

COACHES: If the fields are **CLOSED**, please take immediate action to notify all your players as soon as possible.

PARENTS: With regard to the often-unpredictable weather conditions in Central Texas, the safety of your children ultimately lies with you. While the DSYSA Soccer Board makes every attempt to ensure everyone plays in a safe environment there is no means pursuant to which safety can be maintained without everyone doing their part, including you. Your adherence to this policy is expected and is mandatory.

If the fields are CLOSED, please respect the decision that has been made in order to provide the safest environment for the children and the coaches alike.

Although Board Members, Coaches, Assistant Coaches, Players and Parents may desire that training sessions or games continue without suspension or cancellation, the decision to stop such activities will be made only after a careful consideration of the latest available weather information and the best interest and safety of everyone involved.

If lightning is detected in the area, all activities will be suspended and are subject to cancellation.

Suspension/Cancellation of Activities

Outdoor activity may be suspended due to rain, sleet or snow at the discretion of the coaching staff and/or the DSYSA Soccer Board of Directors. Typically, if precipitation is the only weather condition affecting play, training sessions and games will proceed as scheduled. Do not assume that if it is raining, games or training sessions will be cancelled. If the precipitation is heavy and it is determined that damage to the fields may occur if activities proceed, the field may be closed and activities cancelled.

With regard to LIGHTNING in the area, all outdoor activity must be suspended when lightning is six miles away or less (6 miles is the closest proximity permitted). All lightning should be monitored from the first flash of lightning or bang/clap/sound of thunder.

If lightning is 30 seconds away, it is **too close**. Clear the field and do not resume play until **30 minutes** have elapsed from the time the last lightning flash is seen or the last bang/clap/sound of thunder is heard.

For evaluating whether to suspend activities, follow the 30-second "flash-to-bang" rule. The "flash-to-bang" method is the easiest and most convenient means for determining distance to the lightning flash, which is integral to assessing the need to postpone or suspend an activity:

1. To use the flash to bang method, time the interval between an observed lightning flash and the point at which the bang/clap/sound of thunder is heard. Count, use a watch, use the clock/timer on a smart phone, or use some other timing device and begins counting the seconds starting when a lightning flash is sighted and stopping when the associated bang is heard. The Smart Phone app **LightningTrak** (free) is a good app to approximate distance.
2. Divide the elapsed time by 5 to determine the distance to the lightning (in miles). Example a count of 30 seconds equates to 6 miles = **too close**.

3. If the time is less than 30 seconds, the potential for a lightning strike is too high and the lightning is **too close**. **All activities should be suspended immediately.**

In the event that play is suspended, all individuals (including athletes, coaches, referees, and spectators) should immediately go indoors or to their cars to wait for the storm to pass. If unable to reach safe shelter, stay away from the tallest trees or objects (such as light poles or flag poles), metal objects (such as fences or bleachers), individual trees, standing pools of water, and open fields.

Resumption of Activities

Play shall not resume until 30 minutes have passed since the last flash of lightning or clap of thunder.

Taking Action

Coaches and/or Assistant Coaches are the individuals who will be most likely to be on the field with the players. As a result, the coaches are the first individuals needing to take action if lightning or thunder is observed. In a similar fashion, if a parent is present during a training session or game, and lightning or thunder is observed, the parent should notify a coach, assistant coach, field marshal, or board member immediately. Do not sit idly by while a training session takes place or a game proceeds if you see or hear thunder or lightning. The coaches, referees, field marshal and/or board members may be focused on their present task and may not observe the lightning or thunder as quickly as a spectator.

All persons at the DSYSYA Soccer Complex need to do their part to assure that the presence of lightning and/or thunder are brought to the attention of everyone else.

If lightning is seen during a training session or clinic, the coaches are responsible for taking appropriate action, which shall initially consist of immediately suspending the current activity. During training sessions or clinics, coaches will be responsible for making certain that none of their players are on the field if there is lightning within 6 miles of the DSYSYA Soccer Complex. The coaches shall then further direct all individuals in the area to clear the field and to seek shelter in a building or in a hard-topped vehicle.

If lightning is seen during a game, the coaches, in concert with the referees, shall take similar action and immediately suspend the game activity and direct all individuals in the area to clear the field and to seek shelter in a building or in a hard-topped vehicle. Once suspended, most games (due to the short overall length) will not resume due to the requirement that DSYSYA Soccer will not permit the resumption of activities until 30 minutes have passed since the last flash of lightning or bang of thunder.

COACHES, PARENTS, and REFEREES: If you own a smart phone, DSYSYA Soccer highly recommends the use of a weather app (**NOAA Weather**, **The Weather Channel**, and **Weather Bug**, are some examples). There are many weather apps for smart phones. In instances of suspect weather, it is vital that a Coach or Assistant Coach monitor the weather, check for WATCHES or WARNINGS and be prepared to walk off the field in the case of lightning or thunder.

If lightning or thunder is detected, coaches shall also notify any Field Marshall or Board Member that may be identified at the DSYSYA Soccer Complex. The Field Marshall (present during games) will be wearing a bright neon yellow vest with the words FIELD MARSHALL across the back. **DSYSYA Soccer owns a Lightning Meter.** This meter may be used by a Board Member or the Field Marshal to determine the distance to lightning strikes if the 30/30 Rule is inconclusive.

I HAVE READ THIS POLICY AND I AM FAMILIAR WITH ITS CONTENTS AND DIRECTIVES:

Coach/Assistant Coach Signature

DATE

Coach/Assistant Coach Printed Name