



## Inclement Weather Policy

### Lightning Safety

Whenever there is lightning present during a WYSA sanctioned activity (practice, game, or tournament) it is the responsibility of the hosting club to determine if it is safe to remain outdoors and playing.

Lightning is the most consistent and significant weather hazard that may affect sports. Within the United States, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) estimates that 60 to 70 fatalities and about 10 times as many injuries occur from lightning strikes every year. While the probability of being struck by lightning is low, the odds are significantly greater when a storm is in the area and proper safety precautions are not followed.

Education and prevention are the keys to lightning safety. The below guidelines are meant to be an educational source and the steps outlined are recommended by WYSA to limit the lightning risk.

1. Designate a person (Club Director, Board Member, or Head Coach (practice situation only) to monitor threatening weather and to make the decision to remove teams, players, spectators, event/game personnel and individuals from an athletic complex or event.
2. Monitor local weather reports each day before any event or practice.
  - Be aware of potential weather situations that could develop during scheduled events or practices.
  - Weather reports can be found through local news coverage, internet, cable and satellite weather programming, the National Weather Service and by smartphone applications.
3. Work with the athletic complex designee to establish a working relationship between the club system and protocols and athletic complex system and protocols.
  - If the athletic complex DOES NOT have a working system in place, the club will provide the primary system used for lightning.
  - If the athletic complex DOES have an existing working system, discuss the working details of both to determine which is more engaged and stricter.
  - Preference would be to use the club system but to understand the athletic complex rules, regulations, and liabilities.
4. Be informed of National Weather Service (NWS) issued thunderstorm “watches” or “warnings,” and the warning signs of developing thunderstorms in the area, such as high winds or darkening skies.
  - A “watch” is issued when severe thunderstorms are *possible* in and near the watch area. It does not mean that they will occur. It only means they are *possible*.
  - A “warning” is issued when severe thunderstorms are occurring or imminent in the warning area.
  - Watches and warnings are not issued for lightning.
5. Be informed of the electronic system or mobile application issued advisory alerts to the onsite club designee. The following information should be followed to determine if the athletic complex is safe:
  - 30 miles or less: Advisory
  - 20 miles or less: Caution
  - 10 miles or less: Not Safe – remove team(s), players, spectators, event/game personnel and individuals from the athletic complex or event to a safe shelter.
  - Resume athletic activities or events when:



- No lightning observed for 30 minutes after both the last sound of thunder and last flash of lightning or informed by the electronic system or mobile application being used.
  - The storm system is 10 miles away and heading away from the athletic site and no thunder is reported with any possible lightning flashes.
6. Know where the closest “safe structure or location” is to the field or playing area, how long it takes to evacuate to that location for all event/game personnel, and have access to it.
- Safe locations
    - Any building usually occupied or frequented by people. (i.e.: a building with plumbing and or electric wiring that acts to electrically ground the structure)
    - In the absence of the above, any vehicle with a hard metal roof with windows shut.
  - Dangerous locations
    - Outside locations increase the risk of being struck by lightning when thunderstorms are in the area. Small covered shelters are not safe from lightning. Concession stands, press boxes, rain shelters, maintenance sheds, and picnic shelters, even if they are properly grounded for structural safety, are usually not properly grounded from the effects of lightning and side flashes to people. They are usually very unsafe and may actually increase the risk of lightning injury. Other dangerous locations include areas connected to, or near, light poles, towers and fences that can carry a nearby strike to people. Also dangerous is any location that makes the person the highest point in the area.
7. Lightning awareness should be heightened at the first flash of lightning, sound of thunder and/or other signs such as increasing wind or gradually darkening skies.
8. Management protocol for lightning injuries.
- Activate EMS
  - Survey the scene
  - Assess breathing and pulse. An individual that has been struck by lightning does not hold a charge and is safe to handle. Begin CPR as it is safe to do so. Early CPR and AED are the keys to survival.

## Tornado Safety

Whenever there is a tornado or a threat of a tornado present during a WYSA sanctioned activity (practice, game or tournament) it is the responsibility of the hosting club to determine if it is safe to remain outdoors and playing.

Education and prevention are the keys to tornado safety. These below guidelines are meant to be an educational source and the steps outlined are recommended by WYSA to limit tornado risk and injuries.

1. Designate a person (Club Director, Board Member, or Head Coach (practice situation only)) to monitor threatening weather and to make the decision to remove teams, players, spectators, event/game personnel and individuals from an athletic complex or event.
2. Monitor local weather reports each day before any event or practice.
  - Be aware of potential weather situations that could develop during scheduled events or practices.
  - Weather reports can be found through local news coverage, internet, cable and satellite weather programming, the National Weather Service and by smartphone applications.
3. Be informed of National Weather Service (NWS) issued Tornado “watches” or warnings,” and the warning



signs of developing thunderstorms in the area, such as rotation in cloud base or greenish black skies.

- A “watch” is issued when conditions are favorable for the development of tornadoes in and close to the watch area.
  - A “warning” is issued when a tornado is indicated by the radar or sighted by spotters; therefore, people in the affected area should seek safe shelter immediately.
4. Be informed of the electronic system or mobile applications issued advisory alerts to the onsite club designee. The following information should be followed to determine if the athletic complex is safe.
- 30 miles or less: Advisory
  - 20 miles or less: Caution
  - 10 miles or less: Not Safe – remove team(s), players, spectators, event/game personnel and individuals from the athletics complex or event to a safe shelter.
  - Resume athletic activities or events when:
    - The storm system is 10 miles away and heading away from the athletic site.
    - The complex has been properly evaluated and cleared of any possible damage or debris.
5. Know where the closest “safe structure or location” is to the field or playing area, how long it takes to evacuate to that location for all event/game personnel and have access to it. Immediate Action:
- People with mobility concerns should seek shelter at the time of a tornado watch, NOT a tornado warning.
  - Seek shelter immediately. Areas to look for include a sturdy building. If you can drive away from the tornado safely, do so. DO NOT seek shelter in a car. But if you must, get down in your car and cover your head, or abandon your car and seek shelter in a low-lying area such as a ditch or ravine.
6. Management protocol for tornado injuries.
- Activate EMS
  - Survey the scene
  - Remain calm and listen for instructions and information from emergency personnel and WYSA Representatives.
  - Provide first aid if it can be done safely.