

14.00 Risk Management

14.01 Oklahoma Soccer Association Lightning Safety Policy

The seemingly random nature of thunderstorms cannot guarantee the individual or group absolute protection from lightning strikes, however, being aware of, and following proven lightning safety guidelines can greatly reduce the risk of injury or death.

The individual is ultimately responsible for his/her personal safety and has the right to take appropriate action when threatened by lightning. Adults must take responsibility for the safety of children in their care during thunderstorm activity.

14.02 Action Plan

Management, event coordinators, organizations, and groups should designate a responsible, person(s) to monitor the weather to initiate the evacuation process when appropriate. Monitoring should begin days and even hours ahead of an event.

- A) A protocol needs to be in place to notify all persons at risk from the lightning threat. Depending on the number of individuals involved, a team of people may be needed to coordinate the evacuation plan. Adults must take responsibility for the safety of children in their care.
- B) Safer sites must be identified beforehand, along with a means to route the people to those locations.
- C) The "All Clear" signal must be identified and should be considerably different than the "Warning" signal. Suggested that a single air horn blast is the warning signal to clear fields. Two blasts will indicate the all clear.
- D) The Action Plan must be periodically reviewed by all personnel and drills conducted.
- E) Consider placing lightning safety tips and/or the action plan in game programs, flyers, score cards, etc., and placing lightning safety placards around the area. Lightning warning signs are effective means of communicating the lightning threat to the general public and raise awareness.

14.03 Advanced Warning Options

- .A) "If you can see it, flee it; If you can hear it, clear it."
- B) TV Weather Channel; NOAA Weather Radio

- C) Commercial lightning detectors; off-site meteorological services
- 14.04 Make decision to suspend activities and notify people.
- A) The 30/30 Rule states that people should seek shelter if the "Flash-To-Bang" delay (length of time in seconds between a lightning flash and its subsequent thunder), is 30 seconds or less, and that they remain under cover until 30 minutes after the final clap of thunder. Use a "flash to bang" (lightning to thunder) count of five seconds equals one mile (10 = 2 miles; 20 = 4 miles; 30 = 6 miles).
 - B) Notify people via radio, siren, or other means.
- 14.05 Move to a safe location
- A) A large permanent building or metal vehicle is best.
 - B) **Unsafe** places are near metal or water; under trees; on hills; near electrical/electronics equipment.
- 14.06 Reassess the hazard
- A) It is usually safe after no thunder and no lightning have been observed for thirty minutes. Be conservative on decision
- 14.07 Inform people to resume activities