

Lightning Policy and Guidelines

The City of Anna has installed a lightning prediction system and these guidelines are intended to inform citizens of what precautions to take when the alarm has been sounded.

The majority of lightning deaths and injuries occur every year from the early or later phases of a storm during conditions during sunny or unthreatening weather conditions. Everyone present at a sports facility is at a high risk for lightning strikes. They are dangerous simply because they are large open areas. When the system has activated its alarm, please follow these guidelines provided below:

- Suspend all activity.
- Stay away from metal including fencing, bleachers, flagpoles, dugouts, sheds or goals.
- Avoid high places, open areas, overhead wires and power lines, isolated trees, picnic shelters, golf carts or any type of standing water.
- Avoid using cell phones, telephones or radios unless it needed for an emergency.
- If you are outside, the interior of a car, truck or bus with a metal roof and the windows closed is relatively safe from lightning.
- If you are outdoors with no shelter available, find a low spot away from trees, bleachers or any other metal structures. Make sure this area is not prone to flooding.
- In the event that your hair suddenly stands on end, it means you may be a lightning target. Crouch low on the balls of your feet and try not to touch the ground with your knees or hands.

The warnings are not intended to guarantee that conditions are safe. If there is threatening weather and the alarm does not sound, use good judgment and clear the fields immediately.

Lightning is a hazard that must be taken seriously by coaches, officials, parents, spectators and participants. Lightning is a form of electrical discharge between clouds or between a cloud and the ground. Thunder is the sound wave produced by the explosive heating of air in the lightning channel during the return. Ground-based items such as fences, trees, blades of grass, light poles, bleachers, dugouts and people emit varying degrees of induced electric activity which can act as a lightning rod.

People have relied on the "flash/bang" technique to measure their distance from lightning. Everyone must be aware that, on average thunder can only be heard over a distance of only three to four miles. By the time that someone has heard thunder, they are already well within the reach of a lightning strike.

Due to weather being so unpredictable, it is possible for the alarm to sound often when there appears to be no danger. While this can be frustrating at times to stop practices and or games when it is a sunny day be aware that the majority of lightning deaths and

injuries occur every year from the early or later phases of a storm during conditions that seem clear.

Rain Out Policy

We would like to share our rain out policy.

When we have light to moderate rain in the early afternoon, we will wait to make any decision until we get to the fields. Or, if inclement weather develops at the time just prior to practice or during practice, we will delay any decision for 30 minutes. This will enable us to make a more informed call, and allow us to see if bad weather actually develops or whether it passes us by. The two factors that will cause the rain out to be confirmed are: 1) persistent lightning during that 30 minute spell and/or 2) continuous heavy rain that causes the fields to be waterlogged.

During the 30 minute delay parents, we will need to remain at the fields or arrange for their child to stay in a friend's car. No child will be permitted to be on the field if there is lightning present.

We know this may cause a tough decision for our members who travel further distances. Those parents and players, during these circumstances, can make a judgement call as to whether to risk making the trip or not. If you choose not to take the risk, you will always have the option to attend another practice with your coach at their convenience.

In the case of significant rain during the day, we will try to make a decision about the fields as soon as we can have a member of staff inspect the fields. We will only send out information about cancellations or closures, we will not send out information if training will continue as normal. Every effort will be made to make a choice to reduce concerns and confusion.