



TERREBONNE PARISH RECREATION

LIGHTNING PROTOCOL

1. Lightning is the most common severe-storm activity encountered annually in the United States. Most lightning injuries can be **prevented** through an aggressive educational campaign, vacating outdoor activities before the lightning threat, and understanding the attributes of a safe place from the hazard.
2. A specific person shall be appointed to monitor the weather for occasions where the field supervisor is not available as well as a predetermined method for detecting lightning strikes and distance. Methods for detecting lightning can include but are not limited to:
 - a. DTN WxSentry weather service
 - b. CoachSmart phone app, Weather Bug app, Lightning Detector Devices, or Flash to Bang.
3. Lightning occurring greater than 8 miles from the activity site will initiate a **lightning watch** where weather will be closely monitored for future strikes.
 - a. Issued when the risk of a hazardous weather event is significantly increased, but its presence, location, or timing is unclear; the purpose is to provide enough time to set plans in motion.
4. Lightning occurring **8 miles or less** from the activity site shall initiate a **lightning warning**. **All activity shall cease from continuing and all participants shall seek appropriate shelter.**
 - a. Issued when hazardous weather (i.e., conditions posing a threat to life or property) is occurring, is imminent, or has a very high probability of occurring.
 - b. **Appropriate shelter** is defined as fully enclosed buildings with wiring/plumbing (school, field house, library, home, or similar habitable buildings). Fully enclosed metal vehicles such as school buses, cars, and vans are also safe locations for shelter.
 - c. **Inappropriate shelters** include open areas such as tents, dugouts, refreshment stands, gazebos, screened porches, press boxes, open garages, open canopied areas, etc. Tall objects (trees, poles and towers, and elevated areas) are potential lightning targets and **should be avoided**.
5. Criteria for resumption of activities:
 - a. **Activities shall be suspended for 30 minutes after the last strike of lightning** is seen or at least greater than 8 miles away. This 30-minute clock **restarts** for each lightning flash within the 8-mile radius.

LIGHTNING SAFETY

Avoid being the highest point, in contact with, or in proximity to the highest point in an open field. Also avoid being on the open water. Do not take shelter under or near trees, flagpoles, or light poles.

1. There should be no contact with *metal* objects (bleachers, fences, golf clubs, bats).
2. Avoid single or tall trees, tall objects, and standing in a group.
3. If there is no other shelter, you may seek refuge in a *hardtop* vehicle.
4. The existence of blue skies and/or absence of rain are not protection from lightning. *Lightning can strike 10 miles from the rain shaft.*
5. DO NOT LIE FLAT ON THE GROUND.
6. Avoid using a land line telephone.
7. Avoid standing water and open fields.
8. If in a forest, seek shelter in a low area under a thick grove of small trees.
9. **If you feel your skin tingling, immediately crouch, grab your legs, and tuck your head.**
10. Persons who have been struck by lightning do not carry an electrical charge.
11. All individuals have the right to leave an athletic site to seek a safe structure if the person feels in danger of impending lightning activity, without fear of repercussions or penalty.

Lightning Safe Position: crouched on the ground, weight on the balls of the feet, feet together, head lowered, and ears covered. Assume the lightning safe position for individuals who feel their hair stand on end, skin tingle, or hear *crackling* noises.

SAFE SHELTER

A **safe location** is any **substantial, frequently used building**. The building should have four **solid walls** (not a dug out), electrical and telephone wiring, and plumbing, which **all** aid in grounding a structure.

The *secondary choice* for a safe location is a *fully enclosed vehicle with a metal roof and completely closed windows*. It is important to *not touch* any part of the metal framework of the vehicle while inside it during ongoing thunderstorms.

It is *not safe* to shower, bathe, or talk on landline phones (cell phones are allowed) while inside a safe shelter during thunderstorms.

BASIC FIRST AID FOR LIGHTNING STRIKE VICTIM

1. Survey the scene for safety.
2. Activate local EMS.
3. Move the victim with care, *if necessary*, to a safer location. Lightning victims **do not carry a charge** and are safe to touch.
4. Evaluate airway, breathing and circulation, and begin CPR if necessary.
5. Evaluate and treat for hypothermia, shock, fractures, and/or burns.