

Payson City Recreation

Lightning Policy Statement

Purpose

This lightning policy applies to all official outdoor recreational activities and facilities conducted and owned by Payson City Recreation. This includes the Payson City pool, fields, all outdoor facilities, outdoor practice locations, and all groups affiliated with Payson City Recreation. The purpose of this policy is to outline lightning monitoring procedures, conditions in which to postpone and suspend activities, and various ways in which to handle the presence of dangerous lightning conditions, including safe lightning structures and evacuation, as well as an emergency action plan. These procedures are in place to ensure the safety and well-being of the citizens of Payson. Payson City Recreation has authority to postpone or suspend any Payson City Recreation activity due to the threat of lightning.

Procedure

1. Monitor Weather Conditions

- a. All supervisors should be aware of signs of thunderstorms as well as when thunderstorm conditions are dangerous for attendees and participants. Thunder clouds can become lightning producers within as little as thirty minutes time. Any lightning or thunderstorm activity as well as forecasts showing chances of thunderstorm conditions should indicate that supervisors should begin monitoring thunderstorm activity, such as directions of storm movement and distance to the lightning flashes.**

- b. Supervisors should check weather conditions through various resources such as lightning detectors, weather radio, local TV, internet, or the National Weather Service (www.weather.gov). The National Weather Service issues severe weather and/or thunderstorm watches and/or thunderstorm warnings. A thunderstorm “watch” means conditions are favorable for severe weather to develop in a particular area. A thunderstorm “warning” means the National Weather Service has reported severe weather in an area and for anyone in that area to take the necessary precautions. Both “watches” and “warnings” should be considered as an elevated level of concern for the possibility of lightning.**

Lightning detectors as well as Flash to Bang time can be used to determine the reality of lightning danger. To use Flash to Bang Time, count the seconds from the time lightning is sighted to when the clap of thunder is heard. Divide this number by five to obtain how far away (in miles) the lightning is occurring. (EX: 30 second count/5 = 6 mile distance)

- c. Establish a chain of command in which conditions are to be determined unfit for participation in a given activity. All supervisors should be aware of weather conditions and notify those in the chain of command immediately upon seeing any thunderstorm conditions. A designated person should ultimately determine whether the certain activity should be suspended or postponed. If a thunderstorm is imminent, suspension or the postponing of an activity should take place.

Determining to Postpone or Suspend Activities

A Flash to Bang Time of thirty seconds or less indicates the immediate suspension of activities and the evacuation of all attendees and participants to a safe area. Once the given Payson City Recreation activity has been stopped, it is required that all persons wait at least thirty minutes after all lightning and thunder activity have ceased before resuming any activity.

All coaches, officials, administrators, and staff need to abide by this to ensure the safety of all persons who may be present.

Lightning Structures & Evacuation

Safe locations:

- Enclosed buildings
- Fully enclosed metal vehicles with a hard metal roof and windows up
- Low ground areas as a last resort (ditches, bottom of hill)—assume a crouched position—minimize your body area—do not lie flat

Unsafe locations:

- Locations close to showers, plumbing, or electrical appliances in a building should be avoided
- Areas near towers, light poles, or fences
- Small covered shelters

If or when lightning is detected to be within six miles, evacuation should occur or already be in progress. Appropriate announcements as well as directions for patrons should be given in a timely, efficient, and effective manner by the designated employee(s).

Emergency Action Plan

People who have been struck by lightning do not carry an electrical charge and are safe to handle. There is no danger presented to the healthcare provider. Get emergency help immediately. If necessary or possible, move the victim to a safer location before emergency treatment begins.