

MAGNOLIA ISD LIGHTNING POLICY

METHODS FOR GATHERING LIGHTNING INFORMATION

The decision to suspend a game or practice will be based on the following information systems:

1. DTN Weather Sentry® – DTN WeatherSentry’s® real-time lightning data makes for safer events with fewer interruptions. Monitor real-time lightning as it approaches your area, as well as set up custom advisory and warning zones for your location automatic alerts. Lightning Manager® sends alerts when a strike occurs inside your designated zones of protection, helping you to provide a higher level of protection for fans, players, and employees. An all-clear notification can also be set up to let you know when the danger has passed, and includes a countdown to show you when that notification will likely occur. For the athletic trainers with access to the website, animated lightning strikes with images taken over the past hour can better show if lightning is intensifying or subsiding. They can even pair animated lightning strikes with real-time local radar for a better sense of where storms are headed.
2. If there is no cell service or a computer is not available, staff may use the “Flash to Bang” Method – This method of measuring lightning distance requires no equipment and is easy to determine the approximate distance from the last lightning strike. Thunder always accompanies lightning, even though its audible range can be diminished due to background noise in the immediate environment, humidity, and its distance from the observer.
 1. To use the “flash to bang” method, count the seconds from the time the lightning is sighted (“flash”) to when the clap of thunder (“bang”) is heard.
 2. Divide the number of seconds by 5 and that is an estimation of how many miles away the lightning is.
 - Example: Lightning is seen, you start counting and get to 30 seconds when you hear thunder. $30/5=6$ miles away

DECISION MAKING

The decision to suspend a game or practice will be made by the following individuals:

Practice – The head coach/head sponsor or administrator will have the responsibility of making the final decision. Whenever possible, the staff athletic trainer will advise as to the danger of lightning and severe weather.

Prior to a contest or event – The host head coach/sponsor and/or game/event administrator will have the responsibility of making the final decision. Whenever possible, the staff athletic trainer will advise as to the danger of lightning and severe weather.

During a contest or event – The head game official and administrator on site have the responsibility of making the final decision regarding athletic contest. Whenever possible, the staff athletic trainer will advise as to the danger of lightning and severe weather.

With the information in this policy – all coaches, administrators, and officials can make an informed and intelligent decision regarding the risk of lightning strike or severe weather. Any individual, student-athlete or staff who feels that he or she is in danger of lightning or severe weather has the right to leave the field and seek safe shelter.

RECEIVING WEATHER ALERTS

Any MISD administrator, coach or sponsor may email their feeder high school's Athletic Trainers with their name, phone number, phone carrier and quiet hours to be added to the DTN WeatherSentry® text message alerts.

SAFE SHELTER

A "safe shelter" is defined by any building normally occupied or frequently used by people. Shacks, rain shelters, tents, dugouts or metal sheds are not considered safe lightning shelters.

In the absence of a sturdy, frequently inhabited building, any vehicle with a hard metal roof (not a convertible car or golf cart), with the windows rolled up, presents a measure of safety. Taking shelter in a proper vehicle is certainly better than remaining outdoors. It is not the rubber tires that make the vehicle safe, but the hard metal shell (roof) that transfers the lightning current around the occupant, rather than through the occupant.

SAFE SHELTERS FOR MAGNOLIA ISD

High Schools

- School Building
- Field House
- Weight Room
- Gym
- Locker Room
- Commons
- Vocational Building (not FFA Show Arena)

Junior High Schools

- School Building
- Field House
- Weight Room
- Gym
- Locker Room
- Commons
- Elementary Schools
- School Building
- Gym
- Commons

SUSPENSION OF GAMES, PRACTICES OR EVENTS

Magnolia ISD follows a 10 mile rule when using the weather alerts, or if not available, the flash-to-bang method. If lightning occurs within the 10 mile range, outdoor activity must be suspended until an “all-clear.” The existence of a blue sky and the absence of rain are not protection from lightning. It does not have to be raining for lightning to strike.

RETURN TO ACTIVITY

Once a game or practice has been suspended, the storm should be continued to be monitored. No contest or practice should be resumed until all lightning in the area has ceased for 30 consecutive minutes. The area is defined by the above suspension policy. This is to prevent any casualties by a back flash. A lightning strike can come out the back of a passing cloud or storm.