

STAFF HEALTH AND SAFETY

Policy Statement

It is the policy of the Trumbull Board of Education that each district employee is entitled to work and study under safe conditions.

Every possible precaution will be taken to protect the safety of students, employees, visitors, and others present on district property or at school-sponsored events. These precautions may also allow school officials to search students, their possessions and lockers where there exists “reasonable suspicion” of weapons or other contraband.

Accidents that injure people, damage equipment and destroy materials or property can cause needless suffering, inconvenience and expense. Therefore, every reasonable effort shall be made to provide and maintain a safe work place, safe equipment and proper materials. In addition, the administration shall insist upon the use of safe methods and practices at all times.

Safety rules and regulations have been developed for the protection of all and shall be available in each building. These rules and regulations are to be followed and are applicable, where appropriate, to all.

Understanding and applying safety practices shall also be considered an integral part of the instructional program.

Each principal will be responsible for the supervision of a safety program for his/her school. The Superintendent or his/her designee will act as the auditors of the Safety Program.

General areas of emphasis in the safety program will include, but not be limited to, training, plant inspection, fire prevention, accident record keeping, driver and vehicle safety programs and emergency procedures and drills. Requirements of Local, State and Federal laws, where applicable, with regard to safety shall be observed.

Weather conditions must be taken under consideration for outdoor events such as games and practices. Appendix A: Procedures for Canceling Outdoor Events due to Poor Weather Conditions, outlines the conditions under which outdoor events should be cancelled, and procedures to ensure the safety of everyone on the field.

Safety awareness and the observances of safety rules and safe practices are everyone’s responsibility.

Adopted: 6/6/1989
Revised: 9/9/1992, 7/25/1995,
11/8/2010

Appendix A: Procedures for cancelling outdoor Events due to Poor Weather Conditions, Outdoor Events and Lightning.

The keys to lightning safety are education and prevention. Education begins with learning appropriate lightning safety tips. Prevention of lightning injuries or casualties should begin long before any outdoor event. This section below will outline lightning safety terminology, procedures, and decision making.

Outdoor Event Procedures

Trumbull Public Schools Responsibilities

Prior to Outdoor Events

1. Establish a chain of command that identifies who is to make the call to remove individuals from a field. One person should be selected as the lead contact and should be selected by the head of the organization hosting the event. This can be the individual who reserves the field or a coach at the event.
2. Name a designated weather watcher (A person who actively looks for the signs of threatening weather and notifies the chain of command if severe weather becomes dangerous) on game/practice day. This person can be named earlier in the year for the entire year or on the day of the event by the hosting organization. See section below titled “Evaluating a Lightning Event” for information about determining if an event should be cancelled.
3. Have a means of monitoring local weather forecasts and warnings.
4. Designate a safe shelter for each venue.

Evaluating a Lightning Event

Timing of Lightning

Lightning strikes to individuals are rare but can be deadly. It is also the most consistent and significant weather hazard that may affect athletic participation. The National Severe Storms Laboratory recommends that athletic participation cease when lightning is detected within 6 miles. For our purposes this will be indicated by either a 30 second flash-to-bang count as assessed by an ATC (certified athletic trainer) or as indicated by the Skyscan Unit. This information will be supplemented by monitoring of the Weather Channel as well as local news reports for storm warnings. The decision to delay practices or games will be announced by radio contact to each sport that is training/competing outdoors.

Flash-to-Bang

To use the flash-to-bang method, begin counting when sighting a lightning flash. Counting is stopped when the associated bang (thunder) is heard. Divide this count by five to determine the distance to the lightning flash (in miles). For example, a flash-to-bang count of thirty seconds equates to a distance of six miles. Lightning has struck from as far away as 10 miles from the

storm center. “If you hear it, if you see it, flee it” Postpone or suspend activity if a thunderstorm appears imminent before or during an activity or contest. (irrespective of whether lightning is seen or thunder is heard) until the hazard has passed. Sign of imminent thunderstorm activity are darkening clouds, high winds, and thunder or lightning activity.

Skyscan

The Skyscan unit is an electronic portable lightning/thunderstorm detector. It is able to detect lightning and thunderstorm activity as far as 40 miles away. The unit will indicate lightning activity at ranges of 20-40 miles, 8-20 miles, less than 8 miles, and less than 3 miles away.

This information will be supplemented by monitoring of the Weather Channel as well as local new reports for storm warnings. The decision to delay practices or games will be announced by radio contact to each sport that is training/competing outdoors.

Day of Event

1. For thunder, use the flash-to-bang count to determine when it is time to go to safety. By the time the flash-to-bang count approaches thirty seconds all individuals should be already inside a safe structure.
2. If activities are to be suspended, the hosting organization will contact visitors (i.e., teams or groups from other schools) to leave the field and seek shelter (see “Actions of Teams below).
3. Make the following announcement to spectators via loudspeaker or megaphone:
“Attention ladies and gentlemen, unsafe weather conditions have been detected. The game will be suspended until all lightning activity has passed. The National Severe Storm Laboratory recommends that during thunderstorms people should take shelter inside the school. If you do not chose to go inside the school, then go inside your vehicle with a solid metal roof as a safe alternative. If you are unsure of your appropriateness of your automobile, please seek shelter inside immediately.
4. Team point of contact will ensure field is clear.
5. Once activities have been suspended, wait at least thirty minutes following the last sound of thunder or lightning flash prior to resuming an activity or returning outdoors.

Actions of Teams

When the decision has been made to delay participation, teams will report to a safe structure. A safe structure defined as “any building normally occupied or frequently used by people, i.e., a building with plumbing and/or electrical wiring that acts to electrically ground the structure”. Teams will remain within these structures until thirty minutes after the last bolt of lightning has passed or the last sound of thunder was heard.

Actions of Spectators

In the event of lightning, precautions must be taken to ensure the safety of fans as well as players. When an event is delayed for lightning, an announcement will be made to spectators regarding the reason for delay as well as suggestions for their safety. Spectators should either go into a safe structure or at least get into automobiles which have a solid metal roof (not convertible) and roll up windows. It is not the tires that protect you from lightning strikes, it is the large area of the roof which dissipates the lightning around the vehicle.

Safe Shelters Defined

1. A safe location is any substantial, frequently inhabited building. The building should have four solid walls (not a dugout), electrical and telephone wiring, as well as plumbing, all of which aid in grounding a structure.
2. The secondary choice for a safer location from the lightning hazard is a fully enclosed vehicle with a metal roof and the windows and the windows completely closed (not a convertible with the roof down or removed). It is important not to touch any part of the metal framework of the vehicle while inside it during ongoing thunderstorms.
3. Avoid being the highest point in an open field, in contact with, or proximity to the highest point, as well as being on the open water. Do not take shelter under or near trees, flagpoles or light poles.
4. Assume the lightning safe position (crouched on the ground, weight on the balls of the feet, feet together, head lowered, and ears covered) for individuals who feel their hair stand on end, skin tingle, or hear “crackling” noises. Do not lie flat on the ground.
5. All individuals have the right to leave an athletic site in order to seek a safe structure if the person feels in danger of impending lightning activity, without fear of repercussions or penalty from anyone.

Emergency Action Plan

In the event that a Trumbull Public School and/or guest, coach, administrator, official or spectator is struck by lightning; the following protocol will be followed:

- Any person struck by lightning does not carry an electrical charge, there is no danger presented to the healthcare provider.
- Assess the scene to ensure safety for a qualified health care personnel to enter. This may include transporting the victim to a safe environment before initiating first aid procedures.
- A staff Certified Athletic Trainer will evaluate the victim, activate Emergency Medical Services, and provide necessary first aid, which may include CPR.

Each person must take responsibility for his/her own personal safety during thunderstorms. However, because people are often under the direction of others, whether they are children or adults participating in organized athletics, athletic trainers, coaches, teachers, administrators and game officials must receive education about the hazards of lightning and become familiar with proved lightning-safety strategies.