

# Duchesne Academy Athletics

## Lightning Policy

According to the National Athletic Training Association, each year an average of 25 million lightning flashes strike the ground in the United States. Although harm caused by lightning strikes is rare, they are one of the most dangerous thunderstorm hazards. Monitoring such storm systems and lightning strikes is crucial to the safety of athletes, coaches, staff, and spectators during sports events. This emergency action plan outlines the safety precautions and procedures to take place amidst a lightning event.

### Role Delineation

1. **Weather Watcher:** monitors weather conditions & weather monitoring systems; notifies chain of command on weather threat levels and progressions (*Host athletic trainer, administrator, or staff*)
2. **Decision Maker:** makes the call to suspend and resume activities based on scientific data provided by the Weather Watcher; responsible for notifying spectators and participants (*Host administrator or athletic trainer*)

### Prevention

The NATA recommends utilizing methods of weather monitoring including a lightning detection technology system and/or Flash to Bang method. Houston Methodist recognizes the utilization of the following:

**National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association (NOAA)** satellite system. This system can be installed as an app on a mobile device or via internet and uses GPS to monitor local weather conditions including cloud-to-ground strike.

**WeatherBug Total Lightning Network (WTLN)** monitoring system. This system can be installed as an app on mobile device and uses GPS location to monitor loud-to-ground strike and strike aloft.

**National Weather Service (NWS).** Internet website that provides local weather forecast.

- When suspicious cloud/storm formations occur the HM Athletic Trainer will monitor any of the above weather systems.
- Once lightning breaches a perimeter of:
  - o 15 miles the HM Athletic Trainer will notify the specified chain of command and issue a lightning watch.
  - o 10 miles, the HM Athletic Trainer will notify the specified chain of command and issue a lightning warning. This warning should be announced to spectators to provide adequate time to evacuate and seek safe location.
  - o 8 miles, the HM Athletic Trainer will notify the specified chain of command and issue an evacuation of athletes/staff/coaches to a safe location.



## Evacuation Procedure

Each venue may have their own evacuation route. However, each venue should provide access to a safe, enclosed, indoor location. All students, athletes, coaches, staff, and spectators should be evacuated to safe shelters. Stay away from trees, poles, metal objects, dugouts, sheds, open pavilions and fields.

Safe Shelters include:

- **Grounded buildings (plumbed and electrical)**
- **Vehicles (non-convertibles)**

## Resuming Activity/Play

The storm should continue to be monitored during suspension of activity. Activity/Play should not be resumed until one of the following criteria have been met:

1. Monitoring system gives “All Clear” notification or notification that lightning is no longer in 8-mile radius for 30 minutes.
2. No lightning strikes have been observed for 40 seconds or more for a consecutive 30-minute time frame using the Flash-to-Bang method.

Alert	Meaning
“Heads Up”	Lightning within 15 miles
“Begin Safety Procedures”	Lightning with 10 miles
“You are now in danger, safety procedures to be completed”	Lightning within <b>8 miles</b>
“All Clear”	Lightning has not been detected at 8 miles for 30 minutes

*Common Alerts for Real-Time Notification (adopted from NATA 2013 Position Statement)*



## Lightning Injury Emergency

It is essential that for the emergency action plan to yield safe outcomes an emergency team be identified for each venue. The emergency team may consist of many personnel such as physicians, emergency service technicians, athletic trainers, coaches, event coordinator, athletic training students, or even other athletes or bystanders.

Roles should be clearly assigned prior to sport events to ensure a direct line of communication and accountability of everyone's role. Knowing one's role further promotes a safe and timely coordination of care in the case of an emergency event.

- **Weather Watcher:** monitors weather conditions & weather monitoring systems; notifies chain of command on weather threat levels and progressions *(Host athletic trainer, administrator, or staff)*
- **Decision Maker:** makes the call to suspend and resume activities based on scientific data provided by the Weather Watcher; responsible for notifying spectators and participants *(Host administrator or athletic trainer)*
- **EMS Activator:** calls 9-1-1 to activate Emergency Response *(Administrator, coach, staff, etc.)*
- **Retriever:** responsible for retrieving AED and any other emergency equipment needed by the first responder *(Coach, staff, AT student, etc.)*
- **EMS Guide:** personnel designated to flag down and direct EMS to emergency site *(Coach, staff, AT student, etc.)*

***In the event of a lightning injury the following procedure should be administered for best care practice.***

1. Ensure the scene is safe to enter
2. Move patient to safer location
3. Assess patient for breath and pulse and activate EMS
4. Assess level of consciousness
5. Evaluate and treat for spinal injury
6. Evaluate and treat for hyperthermia

## Advocacy

Below are slogans supported by the National Weather Service to promote lightning safety awareness.

**“No Place Outside Is Safe When Thunderstorms Are In The Area!”**

**“When Thunder Roars, Go Indoors!”**

**“Half An Hours Since Thunder Roars, Now It's Safe To Go Outdoors!”**

The protocols outlined in this EAP align with the best practices as recommended by the National Athletic Trainers' Association's Position Statement on Lightning Safety. To remain compliant with best practice, this lightning emergency action plan is to be rehearsed at least once per year.



# Venue-Specific EAP Information

Venue Name: Agee Family Sports Complex

Venue Address: 10202 Memorial Dr  
Houston, TX 77024

Houston Methodist Athletic Trainer: Rachel Poe

Venue Administrator: Alye Inman – Head of Athletics

AED Location(s): Sideline near home bench (inside med kit/bag)

## Role Designation:

Weather Watcher -	<u>Rachel Poe</u> <i>Name</i>	<u>Athletic Trainer</u> <i>Position</i>
Decision Maker -	<u>Alye Inman</u> <i>Name</i>	<u>Head of Athletics</u> <i>Position</i>
EMS Activator -	<u></u> <i>Name</i>	<u>Head Coach</u> <i>Position</i>
Equip. Retriever -	<u></u> <i>Name</i>	<u>Assistant Coach</u> <i>Position</i>
EMS Guide -	<u></u> <i>Name</i>	<u>Assistant Coach</u> <i>Position</i>

