# *KATY ISD LIGHTNING GUIDELINES*

While the probability of being struck by lightning is extremely low, the odds are significantly greater when a storm is in the area and proper safety precautions are not followed. Prevention and education are the keys to lightning safety. The Athletic Trainer, Head Coach, and/or Administrator will monitor conditions using the following methods.

- **Weather Sentry** – This is an internet based weather reporting system that utilizes GPS to record active lightning strikes and is the main system used by authorized KATY ISD staff.

    1. When a suspicious cloud/storm approaches, the Athletic Trainer/Head Coach, Asst. Coach or Administrator will monitor Weather Sentry.
    2. Once LIGHTNING breaches the 10 mile perimeter/radius, the fields, tennis courts, pools should be evacuated of all players/students, coaches, officials and fans to safe shelters (see Evacuation Procedures below).

- **"Flash to Bang" Method** – This method estimates the distance of lightning. Upon seeing the flash of lightning, start counting the seconds until thunder is heard. Divide the time in seconds by five to measure the distance.

    1. When a suspicious cloud/storm approaches, the Athletic Trainer/Head Coach, Asst. Coach or Administrator will monitor the approaching storm using the flash to bang method.
    2. Once the flash bang count reaches 40 seconds or less, the fields, tennis courts, pools should be evacuated of all players/students, coaches, officials and fans to safe shelters (see Evacuation Procedures below).

**Evacuation Procedures:**

All students/athletes, coaches, officials, and fans should be evacuated to a safe shelter. Staying away from tall or individual trees, lone objects (light or flag poles), metal objects, and open fields.

- **Examples of Safe Shelters**
    1. Any building that is grounded (plumbing and electrical). *A dugout/shed/awning are not safe shelters.*
    2. Bus/Vehicle (not convertibles)

**Resuming Practice/Competition Safely**

Once a game or practice has been suspended the storm should continue to be monitored. *No contest or practice should be resumed until:*

1. The **Weather Sentry** system has sent the "All Clear" message or 30 minutes after the last strike within the 10 mile perimeter/radius.

Or

2. NO lightning strike has been observed within 10 miles (40 seconds) for 30 consecutive minutes using the **"Flash to Bang"** method.

Although the home team is responsible for each game/match, it should be noted that the Athletic Trainer, Head Coach, Asst. Coach and/or Administrator is wholly responsible for the safety and well-being of adults and students in his/her charge. If no policy/guidelines is in effect at the out of town site, it is recommended that the KATY ISD guidelines be followed.