KSHSAA GUIDELINES FOR LIGHTNING SAFETY

1. **When thunder is heard or cloud-to-ground lightning is seen, the leading edge of the thunderstorm is close enough to pose a lightning risk. Suspend play and take shelter immediately.**

2. Once play has been suspended, wait at least 30 minutes from the last sound of thunder or lightning strike witnessed before resuming the activity.

3. Any subsequent thunder or lightning strike during the 30-minute waiting period resets the clock, and a new 30-minute waiting period begins.

4. When independently validated lightning detection devices or mobile phone apps are available, this technology could be used to assist in making decisions to suspend play if a lightning strike is noted to be within 10 miles of the event location. However, you should never depend on the reliability of these devices and, thus, hearing thunder or seeing lightning should always take precedence over information from a mobile app or lightning detection device.

ANYTIME LIGHTNING CAN BE SEEN OR THUNDER HEARD, RISK IS PRESENT!

At night, under certain atmospheric conditions, lightning flashes may be seen from distant storms. In these cases, it may be safe to continue an event. If no thunder can be heard and the flashes are low on the horizon, the storm may not pose a threat. Independently verified lightning detection information would help eliminate any uncertainty.

SCHOOL CONSIDERATIONS:

1. A documented plan for handling severe weather situations such as lightning should be in place.
2. The people responsible for monitoring weather activity and determining when to suspend practice or competition should be identified. Ideally these people will **NOT** be a coach or an official involved in the game or practice, as they may be too involved with their other duties to monitor the weather.
3. Each school will need to determine their most effective means of monitoring the weather. **No matter how weather is monitored, hearing thunder or seeing lightning should always take precedence in decision making over information obtained from other sources.**
4. All personnel, athletes, and spectators should be clearly informed in advance of available safe structures or shelters in the event of severe weather. Events should be suspended early enough to allow fans time to exit the venue and find a safe location.
5. The ideal safe structure is a fully enclosed building with plumbing, electrical wiring, and telephone service which all aid in grounding the structure.
6. Fully enclosed automobiles with metal roofs, including school buses, provide adequate shelter as well.
7. Avoid using bathrooms or showers as shelter areas as the plumbing pipelines provide a path for the lightning to enter the structure. Also avoid using corded telephones or headsets during a thunderstorm and avoid standing near utilities.
8. If communication is necessary during the storm, cellular and cordless phones are considered reasonably safe.

National Federation of State High School Associations. NFHS Guidelines on Handling Practices and Contests During Lightning and Thunder Disturbances. www.nfhs.org/resources/sports-medicine.

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NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE FORECAST/ALERTS BY LOCATION:
https://weather.gov/alerts

NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE WEATHER RADIO FREQUENCIES:
https://www.weather.gov/nwr/station_listing

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