



## Guidelines on Handling Contests During Lightning Disturbances

The purpose of these guidelines is to provide a default policy to those responsible for making decisions concerning the suspension and restarting of contests based on the presence of lightning. The preferred sources from which to request such a policy for your facility would include your state high school association and the nearest office of the National Weather Service.

### Proactive Planning

1. Assign staff to monitor local weather conditions before and during events.
2. Develop an evacuation plan, including identification of appropriate nearby shelters.
3. Develop criteria for suspension and resumption of play:
  - a. When thunder is heard, or a cloud-to-ground lightning bolt is seen, the thunderstorm is close enough to strike your location with lightning. Suspend play and take shelter immediately.
  - b. Thirty-minute rule. Once play has been suspended, wait at least 30 minutes after the last thunder is heard or flash or lightning is witnessed prior to resuming play.
- c. Any subsequent thunder or lightning after the beginning of the 30- minute count, reset the clock and another 30-minute count should begin.
4. Hold periodic reviews for appropriate personnel.

For more detailed information, refer to the "Guidelines for Lightning Safety" contained in the NFHS Sports Medicine Handbook.

**Revised October 2007**



## KHSAA Severe Weather Policy

The Referee or head official shall delay or cancel a competition at the first site of lightning or sound of thunder at the site and the site shall be cleared of all persons immediately by event administration.

If it is anticipated that the storm will pass, the competition may be resumed following a three (3) minute warm-up period, no sooner than thirty (30) minutes after the last sight of lightning or the last sound of thunder.

If the severe weather is of great length or intensity, the Referee or lead contest official has the responsibility and authority to cancel the competition. Officials are encouraged to learn the weather forecast prior to game time. Safety of the public and participants is the most important factor in any decision of this type.

If a contest is postponed after the start due to inclement weather, the officials originally assigned to the contest shall make every effort to be available for the completion date. The member schools will not be liable for an additional fee for the officials to work the rescheduled game but will be liable for any additional travel expense (mileage) fee. Each local officials association is to implement a policy for the remuneration of officials working a rescheduled contest who were not originally assigned to the contest.

If a contest is cancelled while the officials are en route, the home school is responsible for the payment of a mileage fee to the official or crew of officials, plus a fee of 1/5 of the scheduled contest fee to each official.

If a contest is cancelled and the officials are notified prior to departure, there is no financial liability on the part of the school.