

*Dover/Sherborn Soccer Club*

**Lightning Safety Tips** (rev. 09.15.05)

Excerpted from National Lightning Safety Institute web site ([http://www.lightningsafety.com/nlsi\\_pls/ncaa.html](http://www.lightningsafety.com/nlsi_pls/ncaa.html)) and the December 2004 National Athletic Trainers' Association Position Statement: Lightning Safety for Athletics and Recreation

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According to the National Lightning Safety Institute, lightning is the most frequent weather hazard impacting athletics events.

Suspension of athletic activities should be planned in advance. Understanding of SAFE shelters is essential. SAFE evacuation sites include:

- a. Fully enclosed metal vehicles with windows up.
- b. Substantial buildings.

UNSAFE SHELTER AREAS include all outdoor metal objects like flag poles, fences and gates, high mast light poles, metal bleachers, golf cars, machinery, etc. AVOID trees. AVOID water. AVOID open fields. AVOID the high ground.

Postpone or suspend activity if a thunderstorm appears imminent before or during an activity or contest (regardless of whether lightning is seen or thunder heard) until the hazard has passed. Signs of imminent thunderstorm activity are darkening clouds, high winds, and thunder or lightning activity.

If you hear thunder, it and the associated lightning are within 6-8 miles. **A good lightning safety motto is: "If you can see it (lightning) flee it; if you can hear it (thunder), clear it."**

**More specifically, the National Athletic Trainers' Association Position Statement: Lightning Safety for Athletics and Recreation recommends that a "flash-to-bang count" of 30 seconds or less should be used as a minimal determinant of when to suspend activities. In other words, by the time the flash-to-bang count approaches 30 seconds (or is less than 30 seconds), all individuals should already be inside or should immediately seek a safe structure or location.**

The 30-second rule is not an arbitrary guideline. Studies have found that in larger thunderstorms, the distance between successive flashes can be up to 6 miles (i.e., a flash-to-bang count of 30 seconds) in approximately 80% of the flash pairs. If a flash-to-bang count of 30 seconds is observed, the next flash could conceivably be at the observer's location.

Wait a minimum of 30 minutes from the last observed lightning or thunder before resuming activities.

People who have been struck by lightning do not carry an electrical charge and are safe to handle. Apply first aid immediately if you are qualified to do so. Get emergency help promptly.