



FOX CHAPEL AREA YOUTH SOCCER LIGHTNING SAFETY POLICY

“Coach/AGC Fact Sheet”

***PLEASE READ AND BECOME FAMILIAR WITH THE COMPLETE
FCAYS LIGHTNING SAFETY POLICY POSTED ON THE FCAYS WEBSITE**

All thunderstorms produce lightning and are dangerous.

Lightning often strikes as far as 10 miles away from any rainfall.

Thunder can be heard from approximately 10 miles away.

If you can hear thunder, lightning is close enough that it could strike your location at any moment.

A safe place is a substantial, fully enclosed building with wiring and plumbing.

Dugouts, RAIN SHELTERS, sheds, under bleachers, etc. - ARE NOT SAFE. Stay away from metal goal posts, fences, fence posts and stakes. Stay away from trees and their root systems and puddles of water.

In the absence of a safe structure, a hard-topped metal vehicle with the windows fully closed provides good protection.

If you cannot get to a safe structure or a vehicle, find the lowest area of ground. Assume a crouched position on the ground with feet together and all of the weight on the balls of the feet. It is important to minimize contact with the ground. Arms should be wrapped around knees with head down and ears covered. **DO NOT LAY FLAT ON THE GROUND.** Any person who feels their hair stand on end, skin tingle, or hears crackling noises is in an area of imminent lightning strike and should assume the crouched position described above.

If someone is struck by lightning, call 911 immediately. People who have been struck by lightning do not carry an electrical charge. Therefore, cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) is safe for the first responder. Automated external defibrillators (AEDS) are a safe means of

reviving people in cardiac arrest, including lightning strike victims.

I. Practice Procedures

Be diligently aware of potential thunderstorms by consulting with appropriate and reliable weather forecasting services to determine ahead of time whether practice should be cancelled.

Coaches are instructed to use caution and cancel practice if the threat of thunderstorms is likely.

During practice, if lightning is sighted or thunder is heard then the head coach or assistant coach shall immediately stop practice and all individuals should be directed from the field to the closest safe shelter as described above. Practice should not be resumed. **IF LIGHTNING IS SIGHTED OR THUNDER IS HEARD, PRACTICE IS IMMEDIATELY CANCELLED FOR THE DAY/NIGHT.** A parent may also remove his/her child from the playing field at any time.

Have a plan for bad weather. Players who get dropped off for practice need to either be picked up immediately or make sure there is room in vehicles to safely account for all individuals.

When in doubt regarding possible thunderstorms, cancel practice ahead of time.

II. Game Day Procedures

A. Non-Middle Road Fields

Chain of Command – FCAYS coaches, opposing coaches and referees all have the authority to remove individuals from the field because of a threat of lightning. A parent may also remove his/her child from the playing field at any time.

Weather Watcher – FCAYS head coach shall consult with the opposing head coach and referees to establish a weather watcher who will monitor the weather through an appropriate weather forecasting service as well as through observation of the weather situation. The weather watcher should be someone other than a coach or referee.

IF LIGHTNING IS SIGHTED OR THUNDER IS HEARD, PLAY IS IMMEDIATELY SUSPENDED.

Play may not be resumed until no-less-than 30 minutes has elapsed since the last detected sound of thunder. Every detected sound of thunder will restart the minimum, full-30 minute waiting period over again.

Coaches and referees shall consult with one another with regard to whether the game should be cancelled for the day and rescheduled, in accordance with PA West rules.

In most circumstances, SAFE SHELTER FOR INDIVIDUALS REMOVED FROM THE FIELD DUE TO WEATHER/LIGHTNING SHALL BE IN VEHICLES.

B. Middle Road Fields

Chain of Command – The designated Field Marshal shall be the weather watcher who will monitor the weather through an appropriate weather forecasting service as well as through observation of the weather situation for signs of developing thunderstorms in the area and shall immediately inform others in the chain of command. The designated Field Marshal, head of refereeing, Club President, or any or all of them shall have the authority to remove individuals from the field in the event of potential threat from lightning or other weather conditions. A parent may also remove his/her child from the playing field at any time.

IF LIGHTNING IS SIGHTED OR THUNDER IS HEARD, PLAY IS IMMEDIATELY SUSPENDED.

Play may not be resumed until no-less-than 30 minutes has elapsed since the last detected sound of thunder. Every detected sound of thunder will reset the minimum, full-30 minute waiting period over again.

Those individuals in the chain of command shall communicate suspension and resumption of play as follows:

Suspension of Play - 1 long burst (15 seconds) from air-horn

Resumption of Play – 3 short bursts from air-horn

In most circumstances, SAFE SHELTER FOR INDIVIDUALS REMOVED FROM THE FIELD DUE TO WEATHER/LIGHTNING SHALL BE IN

VEHICLES. Those in the chain of command, along with FCAYS coaches and referees, shall direct individuals away from rain shelters or pavilions (which are unsafe) and to vehicles or other safe shelter as described above. Individuals arriving in the parking lot should be directed to remain in their vehicles.