

DEALING WITH INCLEMENT WEATHER

~ REVISION 9/21/2006 ~

The WPIAL is advising all schools of the following when inclement weather is a possibility:

1. It is recommended that principals, athletic directors, contest officials, and coaches meet prior to the contest regarding the possibility of inclement weather for all sports to insure that there are clear predetermined guidelines established to address any and all scenarios.
2. Do any and all things possible to insure the safety of the participants, fans and others. Please reference the "Lightning Safety" guidelines below.
3. All WPIAL section football games must be played in their entirety as they bear on post season qualification.
4. The NFHS sport specific rule books identify criteria regarding potential termination of contests and the requirements that identify when games are considered official. These guidelines must be followed. If the specific sport rule book does not specify termination guidelines, insofar as possible, all games should be played to conclusion.
5. It is a recommendation (**and it is only a recommendation**) of the WPIAL that all non-section football games postponed before the conclusion of the first half, be concluded at a later date.
6. It is recommended that non-section football games interrupted in the second half or games that are being played under the "mercy rule" be terminated with the existing score unless it is mutually decided that the game should be concluded at a later date.
7. Remember that if a non-section football game is not concluded, the existing score will stand. The National Federation Rule Book Rule 3, Article 3 states: **"Games interrupted because of events beyond the control of the responsible administrative authority shall be continued from the point of interruption, unless the teams agree to terminate the game with the existing score or there are conference, league or state associations rules which apply."**

LIGHTNING SAFETY

Coaches, officials, Certified Athletic Trainers and players must recognize the hazard posed by lightning and know what to do to minimize the risk of serious injury or death during outdoor activities.

Use the electronic devices to **determine** potential for lightning **injury and convey this risk** to game officials and coaching staffs. If you do not have a lightning detector use the "Flash-to-bang" method for measuring lightning distance. As lightning approaches, the time in seconds from seeing the stroke to hearing the thunder decreases. For each 5-second count, lightning is 1 mile away.

INCLEMENT WEATHER – CONTINUED

At a count of 15 seconds (3 miles) there is imminent danger! Seek shelter immediately. It is strongly recommended that you seek shelter at a count of 30 seconds (6 miles). Follow your institutions policy and go to a safe location, **(a completely enclosed area), staying away from open doors and windows.**

Turn off and stay away from electrical appliances. Avoid using a regular telephone (except in emergency situations).

A cellular or portable phone is safe if the person and the antenna are located within a safe location and if all other precautions are followed.

A car or bus can act as a “safe location” as long as the windows are closed completely and you stay away from the windows.

If no safe structure or location is within a reasonable distance, find a thick grove of small trees surrounded by taller trees or a dry ditch. Assume a crouched position on the ground with only the balls of the feet touching the ground, wrap your arms around your knees and lower your head. **DO NOT LIE ON THE GROUND.**

Wait a minimum of 30 minutes from the last lightning strike/visual/sound or until the lightning detector indicates that the storm is no longer a threat. Any subsequent lightning or 30 minute count should reset the clock and another count should begin.