



## RELATED EMERGENCY SITUATIONS

### **INCLEMENT WEATHER PROCEDURES**

**General Policy** – *In the case of inclement (i.e. Thunderstorms/Lightning, Hail, Hurricane, Tornado), it will be under the direct discretion of the on-site Certified Athletic Trainer to determine if the practice/game fields should be evacuated. Exceptions will be made for golf, whereby the head coach will have to suspend activity in the absence of an Athletic Training staff member. In absence of an athletic trainer, the Head Coach will be in coordination with the Athletic Director.*

**Lightning** – *Lightning is a dangerous phenomenon. The athletic training staff has developed a lightning policy to minimize the risk of injury from lightning strike Ephrata athletes, coaches, support staff and fans. To monitor lightning the Athletic Trainer will utilize both the Flash-Bang method and a Sky Scan Lightning Detector. Athletic teams that practice and compete outdoors are at risk when the weather is inclement. For this reason the following guidelines, adopted from the NCAA and NATA, must be observed if it appears that lightning is possible for the area:*

1. If inclement weather is forecasted for the area or sighted in the area, a certified ATC will get a weather update by telephone or internet.
2. Lightning detectors will be used by the ATC. If lightning is detected and the severe weather signal is illuminated, with two subsequent readings within 30 seconds on the detector at 3-8 mile range regardless of the presence of visible lightning all athletes and personnel must evacuate the fields and tennis courts and seek shelter.
  - The nearest shelter to the war memorial fields would be the cars, bus, or high school gymnasium.
  - The nearest shelter to the EMS fields would be the cars, bus, or middle school gym.
3. If the lightning detector is not present, use the countdown or “Flash Bang” method. To use the Flash Band method, count the seconds from the time lightning/flash is sighted to when the clap/bang of thunder is heard. Divide the number by 5 and equals how far away (in miles\_ the lightning is occurring. As a minimum, the NCAA and the National Severe Storms Laboratory, strongly recommend that all individuals have left the athletic sites and reach a safe location by the flash-to-bang count of 30 seconds (6miles). However, lightning can strike as far as 10 miles and it does not have to rain for lightning to strike. Activities will be terminated at the 40 seconds or 8 miles.

4. If lightning is in the immediate area, the certified athletic trainer will notify the head coach as to the status of the inclement weather and of need to take shelter. Teams may return to the field once the lightning detector has detected no activity in the 3-8 mile range or 30 minutes from last sight of lightning.
5. If no safe structure is within a reasonable distance, then other safe areas include: enclosed buildings, fully enclosed metal vehicles with windows up.
6. If unable to reach safe shelter, 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. Minimize contact with the ground, because lightning current often enters the victim through the ground rather than by a direct overhead strike. Do not lie flat! If safe shelter is only a short distance away, it's been suggested to run for shelter, rather than stay in the middle of the field.

**Heat Index/High Humidity** - *During summer and early fall and late spring, high temperatures and high humidity are present. It is important that we make ourselves aware of the dangers of this situation to prevent heat exhaustion and illness. Daily measurements via thermometer/pslinsychometer are taken before each practice during periods of extreme heat and humidity.*

1. If temperatures range from 80 degrees, fatigue is possible with prolonged exposure.
2. Between 90 and 105 degrees, sunstroke, heat cramps, and heat exhaustion are possible.
3. When heat index climbs to 105 to 130 degrees sunstroke, heat cramps, and heat exhaustion are likely and heat stroke is possible with prolonged exposure.
4. At 130 degrees or higher sunstroke or heatstroke are highly likely with continued exposure to sun.
5. If heat index reaches 105 and 130 extreme caution must be taken and practices may be postponed to a cooler part of day.
6. Dehydration must be avoided not only because it hinders performance, but also because it can result in profound heat illness. Fluid replacement must be readily available.

7. Athletes should drink one to two cups of water in the hour before practice and competition, and continue drinking during activity. (every 15-20min)
8. If heat illness is suspected, prompt emergency treatment is recommended. Athletic Trainer should be contacted immediately.

**Signs and Symptoms of Heat Exhaustion** - is a form of shock due to depletion of body fluids.

- Profound weakness and exhaustion
- Dizziness
- Syncope
- Muscle cramps
- Nausea

First aid should include: Rest in a cool, shaded environment. Fluids should be given orally. And the Athletic trainer should be contacted. Athletes with heat exhaustion should no longer practice or compete for the remainder of the day. The athletic trainer will determine the athletes well being.

**Signs and Symptoms of Heat Stroke** - is a MEDICAL EMERGENCY. Medical care must be obtained at once a delay in treatment can be fatal. It can cause death.

- High body temperature
- Hot, dry skin
- No sweating
- Possible seizure or coma

First aid should include: IMMEDIATE COOLING of the body with out shivering. (Recommendations of cooling – ice, immersion in cold water, or wetting the body and fanning vigorously. Victims of heatstroke should be hospitalized and monitored carefully).

**Ways to prevent heat exhaustion/ heatstroke:**

- Clothing- athletes should avoid dark clothing. Athlete should wear clothing that's breathable and light in color.
- Fluid intake is extremely important- before, during, and after practice/game.
- Practicing early in the morning, late afternoon.
- Frequent breaks during practices

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