

## EMERGENCY PLAN RELATED INFORMATION

**Weather events:** In the case of inclement weather, the attending athletic trainer will recommend to the head coach that practice or competition be terminated (the ultimate decision will be with the attending athletic trainer). Decisions will be based on NCAA recommendations concerning threatening weather. All personnel will immediately seek shelter at designated areas, (football practice-Moon Hall loading dock, football game-Homer Field House locker room, baseball-dugout or locker room, softball-dugout or locker room, rodeo-barn, cross country-nearest safe shelter to the area they are running at, tennis-UWA Student Union Building). Of note, once a game or competition has begun, the umpire or official holds the responsibility of game termination. The athletic director has the authority to override the official's decision in the case of inclement weather. Also, all issued weather warnings will be heeded by all of UWA's athletic teams. The University's Campus Police are to go to each venue and warn them of any impending thunderstorm or tornado warnings. Refer to the Lightning Safety Policy.

### Location of all phones

Phones for emergency actions are available for the following sports at the following locations in the event that an onsite cellular phone is not accessible:

1. **If a cellular phone is available it can be used at any location on campus to enact the EMS by dialing 911**
2. **Tiger Football stadium:** access to a phone is located within James P. Homer field house on either the first or second floors: in the taping room (#116), equipment room (#113), secretary's office (#221), and the athletic training room (#216).
3. **Football practice field:** access to a phone at the practice field is located across the street in Moon Hall (physical plant). After regular hours you must enter the left hand, side door to reach a phone in the first office to the right.
4. **Pruitt Hall Gymnasium:** phone access in Pruitt Hall is located in Room #28 (basketball office) or #32 (athletic training room).
5. **Don C. Hines Rodeo Complex:** Phone access is located in the barn office, which the first door to the right past the main entrance to the barn. Additionally, there is a phone located within the rodeo coach's trailer.
6. **UWA Softball Complex:** At this time there is **no** phone access at the site. The nearest location is to send someone to call at the Student Union Building to use the phone, upstairs by the main entrance.
7. **Tartt Baseball Field:** Phone access is located in the Baseball Press Box, behind home plate or in the coaches' offices, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor above the 1<sup>st</sup> base dugout.
8. **Howard R. Vaughan Tennis Complex:** Phone access is located in the UWA Student Union building. The nearest phone is located just inside the side entrance, bottom floor, at the Fitness and Wellness desk.
9. **UWA Cross Country Clubhouse:** There is no phone located in the cross country coach's office. The nearest available land line is located at Tartt Baseball Field (see above #6) or at the Lake LU manager's office.

## UNIVERSITY OF WEST ALABAMA ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT Lightning Safety Policy

Lightning is a dangerous phenomenon. Athletic teams that practice and compete outdoors are at risk when the weather is inclement. The Athletic Training staff has developed a lightning safety policy to minimize the risk of injury from a lightning strike to University of West Alabama athletes, coaches, support staff and fans. To monitor lightning the Athletic Training staff will utilize both the Flash-to-Bang Method and a StormHawk weather radar. Our policy is in accordance with the *2008-2009 NCAA Sports Medicine Handbook* regarding lightning safety.

**GENERAL POLICY:** A member of the Athletic Training Staff (certified or student staff) will monitor the weather and make the decision to notify the head coach or officials of dangerous situations and recommend the suspension of activity in the event of lightning. Exceptions will be made for any activity where an Athletic Training staff member is not in attendance, whereby the supervising coach will have the ability to suspend activity. The decision to suspend activity will be based on:

- ◆ Two subsequent readings on the StormHawk weather radar in the 8-20 mile range regardless of the presence of visible lightning. (This device is portable and will be in the possession of the athletic training staff member or supervising coach.) and/or
- ◆ Utilization of the **Flash-to-Bang Method** (Count the seconds from the time the lightning is sighted to when the clap of thunder is heard. Divide this number by five to obtain how far away, in miles, the lightning is occurring.) *2008-2009 NCAA Sports Medicine Handbook*. If it reveals lightning to be within 6 miles (a 30 second count

between the flash of lightning and the bang of thunder) activity is to be suspended and everyone should seek shelter immediately.

**PRIOR TO COMPETITION:** A member of the Athletic Training staff and/or Athletic Director will greet the officials, explain that we have a means to monitor the lightning, and offer to notify the officials during the game if there is imminent danger from the lightning. The Athletic Director and game officials will then decide whether to discontinue play.

**ANNOUNCEMENT OF SUSPENSION OF ACTIVITY:** Once it is determined that there is danger of a lightning strike, the Athletic Training staff member will notify the head coach and/or official and subsequently immediately remove all athletes, coaches, and support staff from the playing field or practice area/facility.

**EVACUATION OF THE PLAYING FIELD:** Immediately following the announcement of suspension of activity all athletes, coaches, officials and support personnel are to evacuate to the nearest enclosed grounded structure.

**OUTDOOR INSTRUCTIONS:** If no safe structure or location is within a reasonable distance, find a thick grove of small trees surrounded by taller trees, a dry ditch without water, or seek a flat area (do not choose an open area where you will be the highest object). When there, crouch down wrapping your arms around your knees and lower your head to minimize contact with the ground and wait for the storm to pass. *(2008-2009 NCAA Sports Medicine Handbook)*

**REMEMBER:** an automobile, golf cart, or open shelter are not ideal shelters, but will offer you some protection from a lightning strike. Do not touch any metal structures directly after a lightning strike.

#### **At UWA**

- Football Practice: Evacuate to the loading dock of Moon Hall (Physical Plant)
- Football Game: Evacuate to the locker room in Homer Field House
- Softball Game or Practice: Evacuate to the dugouts (both teams)
- Baseball Game or Practice: Evacuate to the dugouts (both teams)
- Cross Country Race or Practice: Nearest suitable structure. (see above for outdoor instructions)
- Rodeo: Evacuate to the barn or nearest suitable structure (see above for outdoor instructions)
- Tennis: Evacuate to the UWA Student Union Building (both teams)

**Away Events:** All UWA athletic teams participating outdoors will travel with the StormHawk weather radar. A member of the Athletic Training staff will notify the host Athletic Training staff member and game officials before competition and explain that we have a means to monitor the lightning. We will offer to notify the officials during the game if there is imminent danger from the lightning. The UWA Athletic Training staff reserves the right to discontinue playing, in the event the game officials have not suspended play with the knowledge of inclement weather.

**EVACUATION OF THE STANDS:** During a competition, once the decision to suspend activity has been made, a representative of the athletic department will announce via the PA system:

1. Fans are advised to immediately seek shelter in the nearest enclosed, grounded shelter. (Football-Pruitt Hall, Armory, or vehicles, Softball-Student Union Building or vehicles, Baseball-vehicles, Rodeo-Barn or vehicles)
2. **REMEMBER:** an automobile, golf cart, or open-sided shelter may not protect you from a lightning strike so these are not adequate shelters.

**RESUMPTION OF ACTIVITY:** During practice, activity may resume under the following conditions. This decision will be based on:

- ◆ Thirty minutes AFTER the last lightning strike within an 8-20 mile range on the StormHawk weather radar.
- ◆ Thirty minutes AFTER the last lightning strike within a 6-mile range using the Flash-To-Bang method. During a game situation the activity will resume once the Athletic Director, Athletic Training staff member and officials have conferred and the above criteria have been met.

#### **OTHER LIGHTNING SAFETY TIPS:** *(2008-2009 NCAA Sports Medicine Handbook)*

1. There should be no contact with metal objects (bleachers, fences, golf clubs, bats)
2. Avoid single or tall trees, tall objects and standing in a group.
3. If there is no other shelter you may seek refuge in a hardtop vehicle. It is not the rubber tires that protect from lightning; it is the hard top metal roof that dissipates the lightning around the vehicle. Roll up the windows. Do not touch the sides of the vehicle

4. The existence of blue skies and/or absence of rain are not protection from lightning. Lightning can strike 10 miles from the rain shaft.
5. **DO NOT LIE FLAT ON THE GROUND**
6. Avoid using a land line telephone. Cell phones are a safe alternative if in a safe structure.
7. Avoid standing water and open fields
8. If in a forest, seek shelter in a low area under a thick grove of small trees.
9. **If you feel your skin tingling immediately crouch and grab your legs and tuck your head as described above to minimize your body's surface area.**
10. Persons who have been struck by lightning do not carry an electrical charge. Therefore, enact the EMS system and provide emergency care. CPR with an AED is what is most often required. If possible, move the victim to a safe location.
11. For additional information refer to the National Lightning Safety Institute at [www.lightningsafety.com](http://www.lightningsafety.com)

#### DIRECTIONS FOR USING THE STORMHAWK RADAR & LIGHTNING DETECTOR.

1. Prior to practice or competition, monitor weather forecast via the Internet or by calling local agencies for up to date information.
2. Check for any National Weather Service-issued thunderstorm "watches" and "warnings".
3. Monitor the weather for the following: sudden decrease in temperature, increase in air movement, sudden increase in humidity, visible dark clouds (though these do not have to be present for a lightning strike to occur)
4. Communicate with officials and/or head coach prior to activity about potential for bad weather and our monitoring system.
5. Locate the Stormhawk Lightning/Storm Detector in an area removed from other electronic devices or machinery, which could cause a false triggering.
6. Turn the unit on, by depressing the on/off switch
7. Allow the unit to perform a self-check and make sure all programs are running correctly.
8. Use the start icon to locate the Stormhawk icon and enact it.
9. Allow the program to load and set the range of detection to 50 miles.
10. Watch for incoming weather, severe weather warnings and lightning will be noted on the screen.
11. When lightning is within 20 miles, the game officials should be notified, if it is a game the tarp should be placed at that time.
12. Activity will be suspended when:
  - A. The Stormhawk registers 2 consecutive lightning strokes within the 20 mile range
  - B. The Flash/Bang Method reveals lightning within a 6 mile range (30 second or less count between the flash of lightning and the bang of thunder)
13. Once you have determined that there is imminent danger of a lightning strike, communicate to the head coach and/or head official.
14. Evacuate the field and stands to an enclosed-grounded building. REMEMBER, a golf cart, automobile, or open shelter does not provide protection from a lightning strike. If there is no available shelter IE, cross-country, each individual should see an area that is flat and in the open. Crouch down wrapping your arms around your knees and remain in that position until the danger of lightning has passed.
15. Activity may be resumed only IF the danger of a lightning strike is no longer present and no lightning strikes have occurred within the 20 mile range in 30 minutes. This decision to resume activity is to be made by a member of the Athletic Training Staff, Athletic Director, or Head Official.

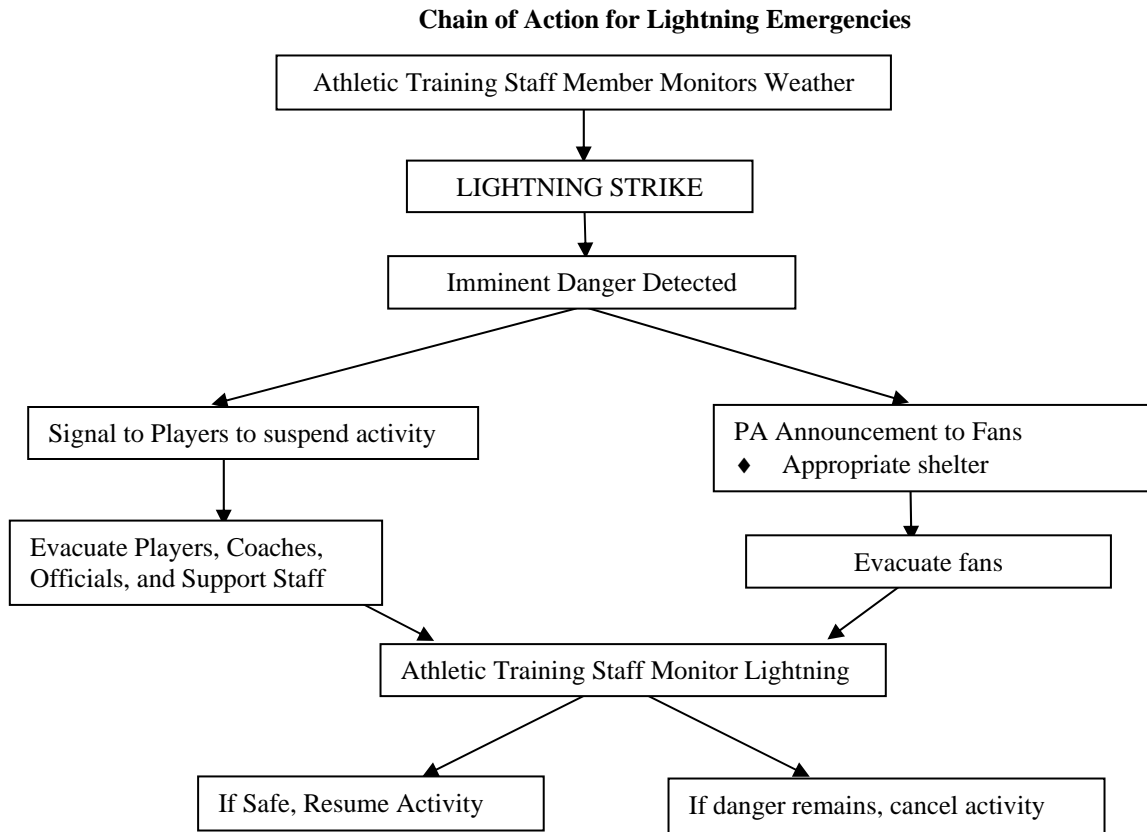
#### FLASH-to-BANG Lightning Detection Method

This method of lightning detection should be used in conjunction with the StormHawk.

1. Prior to practice or competition, monitor weather forecast to include calling local agencies for up to date information.
2. Watch for the flash of lightning.
3. Begin to count (one one thousand, two one thousand . . . )
4. Stop counting when you hear the bang of thunder.
5. Take this number and divide by 5. This will give you an approximation of how far away the lightning is (5 seconds = 1 mile). EXAMPLE: You see a flash of lightning and you begin to count. You reach 45 before you hear the bang of thunder.  $45 \div 5 = 9$ . The lightning would be approximately 9 miles away. Using this method you would suspend activity with lightning at or within 6 miles.
6. Activity is resumed with the permission of a member of the Athletic Training Staff 30 minutes after the last lightning detected at or within 6 miles.

SCRIPT FOR CONVERSATION WITH OFFICIAL

Hello, my name is \_\_\_\_\_. I am a member of the University of West Alabama Athletic Training Staff. I would like to speak with you regarding our lightning safety procedures. On site we have a lightning detector which I will use to monitor lightning. In accordance to NCAA recommendations, lightning detected within 8-20 miles is considered to pose an imminent threat. Per UWA's lightning safety policy, when the lightning detector reveals 2 consecutive strikes within the 8-20 mile range OR the flash/bang method reveals lightning less than 6 miles we strongly recommend suspending activity until the danger of a lightning strike has passed. We have a communication system to inform all participants and any fans.



Lightning Detection Procedures for Athletes during Non Supervised Activities

Examples: athletes using facilities in the off season, or outside of regular practice hours

Lightning is a dangerous phenomenon. Athletic teams that practice and compete outdoors are at risk when the weather is inclement. The safest measure to take is to proceed indoors whenever you see thunderclouds forming and remain until the storm passes. Just because you can not see lightning does not mean you are not at risk if you are outdoors. Other warning signs of impending bad weather include: sudden decrease in temperature, sudden change in humidity, increase in air movement, and visible dark storm clouds (though these are not always present during a lightning strike). The Athletic Training staff has a lightning detection policy in place for practices and games; however, we are aware that athletes often use UWA's athletic facilities when there is no supervision by the coaches. In the event athletes are using the facilities without supervision, the Athletic Training staff would like to educate you and encourage you to use FLASH-to-BANG method to monitor the proximity of the lightning. THE FLASH-to-BANG Method is an approximation of the distance of the lightning NO METHOD OF LIGHTNING DETECTION CAN DETECT EVERY STRIKE.

The Flash-bang method of lightning detection:

1. Auditory: Flash-to-Bang Theory

To use this method, count the seconds from the time the lightning “flash” is sighted to when the clap of thunder “bang” is heard. Divide this number by five to obtain how far away (in miles) the lightning is occurring. For example, if fifteen seconds are counted between seeing the “flash” and hearing the “bang”, fifteen divided by five equals three. Therefore, the lightning flash is approximately three miles away.

- ◆ Each five seconds equal one mile
- ◆ If the time between seeing the “flash” and hearing the “bang” is between 15-30 seconds (3-6 miles), teams should take precautions and seek shelter.

\*The National Severe Storms Laboratory recommends that by the time the spotter obtains a “flash-to-bang” count of fifteen seconds, all individuals should have left the athletic site and reached “safe shelter”.

#### PA ANNOUNCEMENT DURING INCLEMENT WEATHER

May I have your attention? We have been notified of approaching inclement weather. Activity will cease until we have determined it is safe and the risk of lightning is diminished. We advise you to seek shelter in the following areas:

AT UWA:

1. Football Game: Evacuate to Pruitt Hall Gymnasium, the armory, or your vehicle
2. Softball Game: Evacuate to the Student Union Building or your vehicle
3. Baseball Game: Evacuate to your vehicle
4. Cross Country Race: Suitable Structure, ditch without water, group of trees, your vehicle, etc.
5. Rodeo: Evacuate to the Rodeo Barn or your vehicle
6. Tennis: Evacuate to the Student Union Building or your vehicle

Though protection from lightning is not guaranteed, you may seek shelter in an automobile.

Thank you for your cooperation.

#### COMPLIANCE STATEMENT FOR ALL ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT PERSONNEL

As a member of the University of West Alabama Athletic Department, I attest that I have read, understand, and will adhere to the University of West Alabama Athletic Department Lightning Safety policy.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of staff member

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Witness signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date