

# GRANBURY ISD ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT LIGHTNING & THUNDERSTORM PROCEDURE

The extreme weather in our region is a concern to the health and safety of our student athletes. The seemingly random nature of thunderstorms cannot guarantee an individual or group absolute protection from lightning strikes. However with the education of coaches and controlled practice procedures, the risk of injury or death can be minimized.

The following guidelines have been established in order to provide a safe and healthy environment for student athletes participating in outdoor activities in the Granbury ISD. The listed mileage ranges are the designated figures for terminating outdoor activities for both High School and Middle School practices, scrimmages, and games and are in coordination with the Perry Weather Outdoor Warning System and Weather Station.

This policy is designed for the Granbury ISD Athletic programs and is applicable to all other programs that may require students and staff to be outside when adverse weather is possible (e.g., agriculture, JROTC, drill team, band, cheerleaders, and physical education classes).

The Granbury ISD Sports Medicine Department will notify respective staff members and administrators of current and projected weather conditions when necessary. It is the responsibility of each coach to ensure these guidelines are being followed.

## PRACTICES, SCRIMMAGES, GAMES, & CONTESTS

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High School and Middle School Athletics:

The Head Coach, Assistant Coach(es), Game Officials, Event Administrator, and visiting Athletic Trainer, if present, will be notified and alerted of lightning strikes and a thunderstorm approaching. All will be frequently informed with the range of lightning detected as it strikes, the radar (if available) of the approaching storm, as well as the GISD procedure in place.

20-40 miles – The storm will be monitored and the Perry Weather System will be observed by the host Athletic Trainer.

10-20 miles – Head Coach and/or Assistant Coach, and the Athletic Trainer will discuss a possible decision(s) for action in case of a strike within 10 miles or less.

0-10 miles – Action will be made at this time by the Athletic Trainer and/or Coaching Staff to evacuate to shelter immediately. In a game situation, the Game Officials, Athletic Trainer, and Head Coach will make any final decision as to the delay of the game. Evacuate sirens will sound an intermittent blast and a yellow strobe will flash on the Outdoor Warning System signaling to seek shelter immediately.

Coaches will remove the student athletes from the area and spectators will be informed by announcement through the PA system. The delay will last no less than 30 minutes from the time of the last strike within the 0-10 mile range. If at any time there is another strike within the 30 minute delay, the 30 minute delay will start over. Multiple reoccurrence during the delay period may develop the need to cancel or postpone the event to another day.

When the 30 minute delay period expires, a solid siren blast will sound to signal if it is OK to resume play.

If the Perry Weather System is unavailable, follow this simple rule. If you hear it (thunder), clear it. If you see it (lightning), flee it. If you see it, it's too close!

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Public address announcement will be issued to the official announcer (if available) by the Athletic Director/Event Administrator for every athletic event in GISD. The following will be announced:

*Hazardous lightning has been monitored in the immediate area and this sporting event has been temporarily suspended. All team members have been advised to seek shelter in a safe location. This suspension will last at a minimum of 30 minutes.*

*All spectators are advised to leave the stadium bleachers. Stadium seating is an unsafe location during this time. Your health is at risk remaining in the bleachers during this lightning storm.*

*Seek safe shelter. Avoid high places and open fields. Do not seek shelter under trees, picnic shelters, or baseball/softball dugouts. Do not stand near flagpoles, light poles, or metal fences.*

*Again, please seek shelter NOW, this delay will be at least 30 minutes.*

## EMERGENCY EVACUATION AREAS for the following sports

Football/Track & Field – athletes will be evacuated to the Pirate Pavilion or the Pirate Field House

Baseball – athletes will be evacuated to the concession stand building or the indoor batting cage building

Softball – athletes will be evacuated to the Pirate Complex or the Pirate Pavilion

Tennis – athletes will be evacuated to the Pirate Complex or the Pirate Pavilion

Golf – athletes will be evacuated to the clubhouse

Soccer – athletes will be evacuated to the following locations:

High School – athletes will be evacuated to the Pirate Pavilion

GMS Field – athletes will be evacuated to the gym

Cross Country – athletes will be evacuated to the following locations:

High School – athletes will be evacuated to the Pirate Pavilion

Off Campus Sites – athletes will be evacuated to the nearest safe covered shelter

Middle Schools – athletes will be evacuated to the gym

## RECOMMENDED WEATHER WEBSITES for Granbury, TX 76048/76049

[www.pocketperry.com](http://www.pocketperry.com)

[www.weatherbug.com](http://www.weatherbug.com)

[www.wunderground.com](http://www.wunderground.com)

### Lightning and Thunderstorm Awareness

Many lightning casualties occur in the beginning, as the storm approaches, because people ignore or are unaware of precursors.

When thunderstorms are in the area but not overhead, the lightning threat can exist even when it is sunny, not raining, or when clear sky is visible.

According to the National Severe Storms Laboratory, lightning accounts for around 100 deaths and 400-500 injuries a year, more than floods, tornadoes, and hurricanes combined.

The average lightning bolt is 6 miles long. The average thunderstorm is 6 to 10 miles wide and moves at a rate of 25 miles per hour.

Lightning can strike as far as 10 miles away from the rain shaft.