



TEXAS DIVISION OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

SEVERE THUNDERSTORMS? DELAY THE GAME

Sports fields are dangerous places to be during thunderstorms due to the danger of lightning strikes. That's why the National Weather Service and the Texas Division of Emergency Management urge Texans to delay the game when thunderstorms approach.

In wide open areas like sports fields or golf courses, a person may be the tallest object. In addition, metal bleachers, fences, light poles and goal posts attract lightning. When lightning hits these objects, the charge travels along the object, potentially injuring anyone in contact with the metal. Lightning can bounce off any of these objects and strike people nearby.

Officials with schools, athletic programs, day care centers and summer camps, as well as coaches, referees and parents need to understand the dangers. Be prepared to suspend games and move the players and spectators inside nearby buildings or into cars and buses until the storm threat passes. Here are some lightning safety tips:

- If you can hear thunder, you are close enough to be struck by lightning. Take shelter.
- If you are outdoors with no shelter available, stay low.
- Move away from hills and high places: Avoid tall, isolated trees.
- Do not touch metal objects, such as tennis rackets, baseball bats or golf clubs.
- Do not ride bicycles, or lean against fences or metal sheds.
- Do not lean against a car or truck -- get inside the vehicle quickly.



For more information, contact TDEM Public Information at (512) 424-2138 or visit TDEM's Web site: www.txdps.state.tx.us/dem.