

Guidelines for Game Officials and Game Management to Use Regarding Lightning

The purpose of these guidelines is to provide information to those responsible for making decisions about suspending and restarting games based on the presence of lightning. If at all possible, staff should monitor local weather conditions before and during events.

1. The current recommendation of the National Severe Storms Laboratory (NSSL) is to consider terminating play when the lightning is six miles away (flash-to-bang time of 30 seconds or less). This recommendation was developed as a practical way to make a judgment in situations where other resources such as technology and instrumentation are not available.
Therefore, a 30-second or less flash-to-bang count calls for the removal of the athletes from the field to an appropriate shelter.
2. Schools should develop an evacuation plan and identify appropriate shelters
3. The existence of blue sky and the absence of rain are not protection from lightning. Lightning can, and does, strike as far as 10 miles away from the rain shaft. It does not have to be raining for lightning to strike.
4. Thirty-minute rule. When considering resumption of a game, SCISA REQUIRES that everyone wait at least 30 minutes after the last flash of lightning or sound of thunder.