

Luther College

Athletic Department

***Thunder and Lightning
Policy***

Last Updated March 2018

The Luther College Athletic Department (i.e., Administrators, Coaches/assistant coaches, certified athletic trainers, event managers, and game officials) will follow the NCAA Guidelines for Lightning Safety and the NATA position statement on lightning. Lightning and inclement weather are consistent and significant conditions affecting outdoor athletic practices/contests. The Luther College Athletic Department is dedicated to the safety of all student athletes, coaches/staff, and all spectators and will adhere to the following policy and safety guidelines to minimize risk of injury during inclement weather.

Monitoring Weather Conditions

The athletic department staff will monitor weather conditions by utilizing one or more of the following methods:

1. Use of local weather radar and watches/warnings (KWWL, weather.com, etc...)
2. Use of available lightning detection devices/services (Skyscan Lightning detector, Weatherbug mobile app)
 - o *Athletic Department Personnel are required to use the Weatherbug/Spark Lightning app*
 - o *If thunder present, check for lightning in the area*
3. Flash-to-Bang
 - o Begin counting when lightning is seen, stop counting when thunder is heard
 - o Time in seconds from lightning to sound of thunder / 5 = distance in miles
 1. *Example: A Flash-to-Bang count of 50 seconds equals a distance of 10 miles.*
 - o At a minimum, it is recommended that with a Flash-to-Bang count of 50 seconds all individuals should leave the site and move to a safe shelter. Upon the first sound of thunder, lightning is likely within eight to 10 miles and capable of striking your location.

Guidelines for Seeking Shelter

Be Weather/Sky Aware	Lightning within 15 mi
Begin Safety Procedures/Seeking Shelter	Lightning within 10 mi (50 second Flash-to-Bang)
Be in a Safe Location/Indoors*	Lightning within 6 mi (30 second Flash-to-Bang)

****All individuals must be completely within an identified safe location when thunderstorms are already producing lightning and approaching the immediate location and when the distance between the edge of the lightning storm and the location of the outdoor activity reaches 6 miles.*

Safe Locations

In the case that an outdoor activity must be suspended due to lightning, all individuals should be moved to one of the following:

- Substantial, fully enclosed building with windows and doors closed, such as a school, field house, or similar habitable enclosure (Lower Campus→ Inside Regents Center). When at either the Oneota Country Club or Silvercrest Golf Club, the safe location is inside the clubhouse.
- Fully enclosed metal vehicles with windows and doors closed, such as school buses, cars, and vans.

Criteria for Starting, Suspending and Resuming Activity

Activities should be suspended for 30 minutes following the last strike of lightning within a 10 miles radius. This 30-minute clock restarts for each lightning strike that is within 10 miles.

The decision to delay the start of, suspend, and/or resume any outdoor practice or event lies with administrators, coaches/assistant coaches, certified athletic trainers, event managers, and/or game officials.

Guidelines for Competitions & Events

- During Luther College hosted athletic competitions or events, event management personnel will be responsible for monitoring weather conditions prior to, during, and post event.
- In the event lightning or thunder occurs, event management personnel will communicate with:
 - Game officials
 - Head coaches/Athletic trainers regarding safe locations and timelines
 - Event Announcers for public address for spectator safety
- The decision to begin will rest with the game officials with input from the host institution's administrator (event manager) and/or athletic trainer.

Providing Care for a Lightning Victim

- Athletic Department staff should maintain CPR and First Aid certifications (AEDs and other first-aid equipment should be readily available)
- People who are struck by lightning do not carry an electrical charge. (If possible, move injured person to safer location)
 - Call 911
 - Begin emergency procedures (CPR/ rescue breathing)