



## Durango Rapids Soccer Club Lightning Policy

❖ Obtain a weather report each day before your practice or event to determine if severe weather is expected in the area.

❖ Know where the closest "safe structure or location" is to the field or playing area, and know how long it takes to get to the safe structure or location, defined as:

- Any fully enclosed building with plumbing and electricity that is normally occupied or frequently used by people.
- In the absence of a building, any vehicle with a hard metal roof, closed doors and rolled up windows.

❖ **When to seek shelter and when it is safe to return to the field:**

For all locations without a lightning detection/warning system:

- **When to clear the fields and seek shelter in a safe structure or location:**
  - 1) *Preferred*- Use WeatherBug, a free smartphone app, and activate Spark. Seek shelter as soon as Spark indicates a lightning strike within a 7-mile radius of your location.
  - 2) *If a smartphone is unavailable*- When lightning and thunder have been observed, everyone should seek shelter.
- **When it is safe to return to the fields:**
  - 1) *Preferred*- Use WeatherBug, a free smartphone app, and activate Spark. You may return to the fields when Spark indicates no lightning strike has occurred within 6 miles of your location and no thunder has been heard in the last 30 minutes.
  - 2) *If a smartphone is unavailable*- You may return to the fields 30 minutes after the last sound of thunder or flash of lightning.

For the New Mexico Soccer Tournament Complex in Bernalillo, NM:

- **When to clear the fields and seek shelter in a safe structure or location:**
  - Complex will sound a "All Stop / Clear the Field" signal when the complex is being shut down and cleared for lightning (this will be a long sounding siren). Once shut down, every 5 minutes the complex will resound the "All Stop / Clear the Field" siren until the danger has passed.
- **When it is safe to return to the fields:**
  - Once the danger has passed, the complex will sound the "All Clear" signal (double tones)

For Balloon Fiesta Park in Albuquerque, NM:

- **When to clear the fields and seek shelter in a safe structure or location:**
  - The Thor Guard system will sound off a 15-second horn blast and activate a yellow strobe light that will stay on until the danger has passed.
- **When it is safe to return to the fields:**

- Once the potential for a lightning strike has passed, the system will give an “all-clear” signal – three horn blasts, each five seconds long -- and the strobe light will stop blinking.

\*\*\*You can view the current lightning status at Balloon Fiesta Park by logging on to the following site on your mobile device: [balloonfiesta.thormobile15.net](http://balloonfiesta.thormobile15.net)

❖ 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.

❖ If no safe structure or location is within a reasonable distance, find a thick grove of small trees surrounded by taller trees or a dry ditch. Assume a crouched position on the ground with only the balls of the feet touching the ground, wrap your arms around your knees and lower your head. Do not lie flat! The following are unsafe and should be avoided: the tallest trees or objects (such as light poles or flag poles), metal objects (such as fences or bleachers, picnic shelters or pavilions), tents, individual trees, standing pools of water, and open fields.

❖ A person who feels his or her hair stand on end, or skin tingle, should immediately crouch, as explained above.

❖ Please keep in mind: people who have been struck by lightning do not carry an electrical charge, therefore, cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) is safe for the responder.

These recommendations are based on the NATA Position Statement: Lightning Safety for Athletics and Recreation. Rio Rapids SC suggests you familiarize yourself with the entire position statement: <http://www.natajournals.org/doi/pdf/10.4085/1062-6050-48.2.25>