

POLICY

**NORTHVALE
BOARD OF EDUCATION
PROPERTY**

**LIGHTNING SAFETY
7438/Page 1 of 2**

7438 LIGHTNING SAFETY

The Board of Education wishes to maintain a safe environment for all of our students, staff, and visitors. Therefore, all school employees or District approved community groups that use the facilities who are supervising outdoor activities will adhere to the following procedures when thunderstorms are in the area. Please note that the Northvale Borough and Public School District have installed the Strike Guard Lightning Detection System on their athletic fields.

The sounding of the alarm at the school and Borough fields signifies that lightning is in the vicinity. Immediate action must be taken. If a supervised student activity, appropriate action is to be taken by District personnel to assure the safety of students and staff. If a spectator event or activity on District athletic fields, spectators from the field, playing area, or any outdoor location are to seek the nearest available safe structure or shelter, or cars.

Evacuation Criteria:

A. Siren and Flashing Light

Once the Siren goes off, the initial alarm will remain activated for a period of 15 seconds followed by the activation of a strobe light. The strobe will stay on for 30 minutes past the last lightning detected.

In the case of a scrimmage or game at an away site, coaches are to immediately evacuate students from the field or playing area and into the away site school's designated evacuation area or the nearest safe structure, i.e. team bus, or shelter if not able to get the students into the building.

Determination of eventual resumption of the outdoor class, game, practice school, or activity will be made respectively by the game official, supervisor, coach, teacher, and/or the administrator on site.

B. Activity Stoppage

Practice/school activity or community activities: The decision regarding stoppage of an outdoor practice or activity will be directly related to the sound of the siren – immediate evacuation of fields must take place.

Interscholastic Event or Competition: The decision regarding stoppage of play of an official game or contest is the domain of the on-site officials. This authority is



POLICY

**NORTHVALE
BOARD OF EDUCATION
PROPERTY**

**LIGHTNING SAFETY
7438/Page 2 of 2**

unchallengeable and was set forth by the New Jersey Interscholastic Athletic Association. All coaches, officials, and administrators need to abide by this to ensure the safety of all athletes, coaches, games management, spectators, and all others who may be present.

- C. A clearance signal will activate signifying a return to the fields is permissible and the strobe light will no longer be activated.
- D. Shelter
 - 1. Safe areas include:
 - a. Enclosed buildings;
 - b. Fully enclosed metal vehicles with a hard metal roof and windows up;
 - c. Low ground areas as a last resort (ditches, bottom of hill) assume a crouched position – minimize your body area – do not lie flat.
 - 2. Unsafe areas include:
 - a. Open fields;
 - b. Metal bleachers (on or under);
 - c. Fence;
 - d. Umbrellas, flag poles, light poles;
 - e. Tall trees;
 - f. Pools of standing water.

Hours of Operation:

The hours of operation for the lightning notification stations are from 6 a.m. to 10 p.m. seven (7) days a week. The alarm will only sound during these hours. The strobe light operates on a 24 hour – 7 day schedule.

Adopted: May 19, 2014


