

## ATHENS UNITED LIGHTNING SAFETY POLICY

The following recommendations are based on the most current guidelines given by the National Weather Service, the National Lightning Safety Institute, the NCAA Sports Medicine Handbook, and the NATA Lightning Safety Position Statement.

- Monitor local weather reports daily before practice and competition; be informed of National Weather Service-issued thunderstorm watches or warnings
- Establish a chain of command that identifies a specific person (or role) who is to make the decision to remove individuals from the field or activity prior to beginning competition; this person must have unchallengeable authority to suspend activity
- Use a reliable means of monitoring the local weather, and actively monitor for threatening weather - **AUSA uses the phone app: WeatherBug / Spark**
- Identify safe locations from the lightning hazard in advance of the event for each venue, these safe location should be substantial, fully enclosed buildings with wiring and plumbing. In general, players should return to their parents' vehicle since Holland lacks indoor facilities. If a vehicle is not available, restrooms or concessions is an alternate location.
- In the event that a flash of lightning is observed or a bolt of thunder is heard:
  - Seek safe shelter at the first sign of lightning or thunder
  - While indoors, stay away from the walls, windows, plumbing, and electronic devices attached to the walls (including landline telephones); if in a vehicle, avoid contact with the metal frame and radio use
  - Designate a weather watcher to monitor weather conditions from a safe location
- All individuals must be completely within an identified safe location when lightning reaches 10 miles from the location of activities
  - The chain of command and all participants should be given a notification when the lightning is within 15 miles
  - Safety procedures and evacuation preparations should begin when lighting is within 10 miles
  - Safety procedures and evacuations should be complete, and all parties should be in the designated lightning safety shelter when lightning is within 10 miles
- Activities should be suspended until 30 minutes after the last strike of lightning is seen, or is at least 10 miles away from the activity location
  - This timer restarts for each lightning flash within 10 miles or each time thunder is heard