

I received a disturbing email and some subsequent emails on games being allowed to continue with Thunder and Lightning evident.

COYBL requires that OHSAA licensed umpires be used so that our games are played in accordance to those rules for the safety of the players of COYBL. This issue among others is why COYBL will require that ALL Umpires will be required to register with COYBL on the Umpire page if they want to umpire COYBL games in 2012 and beyond. We must have the ability to contact and inform Umpires that work COYBL games.

So that all are on the same page, I have cut and pasted the OHSAA rule on Lightning and inclement weather below:

LIGHTNING AND INCLEMENT WEATHER

Recognition

Coaches, athletic trainers, athletes, administrators and contest officials shall be educated regarding the signs indicating thunderstorm development. Since the average distance between successive lightning flashes is approximately two to three miles, ANYTIME that lightning can be seen or heard, the risk is already present. Weather can be monitored using the following methods:

- **Monitor Weather Patterns** – Be aware of potential thunderstorms by monitoring local weather forecasts

the day before and morning of the competition, and by scanning the sky for signs of potential thunderstorm activity

- **National Weather Service** – Weather can also be monitored using small, portable weather radios from the NWS. The NWS uses a system of severe storm watches and warnings. A watch indicates conditions are favorable for severe weather to develop in an area; a warning indicates severe weather has been reported

in an area, and everyone should take proper precautions. Any thunderstorm poses a risk of injury or death even if it does not meet the criteria for severe weather. Therefore, anytime thunderstorms are in the forecast (even if it is only a 20 percent chance), event organizers shall be at a heightened level of awareness to the potential danger of lightning.

Management

- **Evacuation** – If lightning is imminent or a thunderstorm is approaching, all personnel, athletes and spectators

shall evacuate to available safe structures or shelters. A list of the closest safe structures should be announced and displayed on placards at all athletic venues.

- **Thirty-minute rule** – Competition or practice shall be suspended once lightning has been recognized or thunder is heard. It is required to wait at least 30 minutes after the last flash of lightning is witnessed or thunder is heard prior to resuming practice or competition. Given the average rates of thunderstorm travel, the storm should move 10-12 miles away from the area. This significantly reduces the risk of local lightning flashes. **Any subsequent lightning or thunder after the beginning of the 30-minute count shall reset the clock, and another count shall begin.**

Safety of the Players, Coaches, Parents and Spectators are of the utmost importance and there is absolutely no leeway in these rules. It is Black and White and cast in stone and OHSAA umpires know this and the coaches should know this. It is your responsibility to use the rules as written to protect the kids.

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