



Kimberly Recreation Association Severe Weather Policy Adopted: 2/11/2014

This policy has been adopted by the Kimberly Recreation Association to protect the participants, spectators, umpires, and volunteers at any KRA sponsored or hosted league or tournament game in cases of severe weather, and is not to be deviated from under any circumstances.

Severe Weather Tornadoes - A Tornado is a violently rotating column of air and is regarded as nature's most violent storm. Some tornadoes are clearly visible, while rain or nearby low-hanging clouds obscure others. Occasionally, tornadoes develop so rapidly that little, if any, advance warning is possible. Before a tornado hits, the wind may die down and the air may become very still. A cloud of debris can mark the location of a tornado even if a funnel is not visible. Tornadoes generally occur near the trailing edge of a thunderstorm. It is not uncommon to see clear, sunlit skies behind a tornado.

Tornado Warning - A tornado has been sighted or indicated by weather radar. Any time the Emergency government warning sirens are activated, all activities for that day/evening will end and participants will be instructed to either leave the premise if conditions determine it is safe to do so, or go to the designated area of safety. Take shelter immediately.

Severe Thunderstorm Warning - Issued when severe weather has been reported by spotters or indicated by radar. Warnings indicate imminent danger to life and property to those in the path of the storm. All thunderstorms produce lightning and all have the potential for danger. Those dangers can include tornadoes, strong winds, hail, wildfires, and flash flooding, which is responsible for more fatalities than any other thunderstorm-related hazard. In the event that a Severe Thunderstorm Watch or Warning is issued by the National Weather Service for Outagamie County all participants, spectators, umpires, and volunteers be notified via public address announcements and team notification.

Lightning Safety - Competitions should be immediately suspended as soon as lightning is seen or thunder is heard. All participants, spectators, umpires, and volunteers should seek shelter during severe weather.

Significance - Lightning is one of the most consistent causes of weather-related deaths in the U.S. According to the National Severe Storms Laboratory; there are approximately 100 lightning-related deaths and over 1000 injuries yearly.

Background - Lightning-related injuries mainly occur between May and September. Most lightning casualties happen between 10 am and 7 pm with the majority of those occurring between 2 pm and 6 pm. Therefore, the risk of lightning-related injury appears to be highest during some of the most active periods for outdoor athletic activities.

The average distance between successive lightning flashes is two to three miles which means that risk is present **WHENEVER** lightning can be seen or thunder can be heard. Lightning's risk to individuals and property is increased because of its unpredictability. It often strikes outside of heavy rain and may occur as far as ten miles away from any rainfall.

Note - People who have been struck by lightning do not carry an electric charge. Therefore, it is safe to perform CPR, if needed. Ideally, injured persons are moved into a safe shelter, Lightning-strike victims showing signs of cardiac or respiratory arrest need emergency help.

Alerts - KRA Directors and game umpires can be aware of adverse weather by following local forecasts and by monitoring the National Weather Service (NWS). The NWS issues storm watches and warnings during times of severe weather. A watch means conditions are favorable for severe weather to develop, while a warning indicates severe weather has been reported and appropriate precautions should be taken. It must be remembered that any thunderstorm poses a risk of injury, even if not deemed "severe" by the NWS.

Management - KRA Directors will monitor weather conditions utilizing a radio, television, telephone, and internet, to make the decision to postpone or cancel the event. NWS Green Bay Spotter 24 hour hotline 1-800-

788-6883. While the umpires will assist with the detection process and suspending play per this guideline, the decision to resume play and or cancel the games will be the decision of the KRA Director(s).

Return to Playing Field - The KRA recommends following the 20 minute rule when making return-to-play decisions. After the last flash of lightning is witnessed or the last thunderclap is heard, it is recommended to wait at least 20 minutes before resuming competition. Given the average rate of thunderstorm travel, the storm should move 10 to 12 miles away from the area, reducing the risk of local lightning strike. Any subsequent lightning strike or thunder after the beginning of the 20-minute count should reset the clock and another count should begin.

Emergency Shelter Information - In the event that a situation arises that is or may potentially be hazardous to the health and safety of all participants, spectators, umpires, and volunteers event KRA Directors shall direct them to an emergency shelter.

If a suitable safe shelter is not available, it is best to avoid tall objects (trees, light poles, etc.) that allow lightning an easy path to the ground. It is important to avoid being the tallest object. The person should minimize contact with the ground and should NOT lie flat.

If lightning is imminent or a thunderstorm is approaching, all participants, spectators, umpires, and volunteers should be evacuated to safe structures. The ideal safe structure is a fully enclosed building with plumbing and electrical service, which aid in grounding the structure. A fully enclosed automobile with all the windows rolled up is a reasonable shelter, although care must be taken to avoid contact with any metal inside the vehicle. The hard metal frame and roof, not the rubber tires, dissipate the current around the vehicle. Dugouts are not safe shelters and are not grounded for the effects of lightning.

It is also unsafe to stand near utilities or use a landline during a thunderstorm because of the risk of the current traveling through the lines. Cellular and cordless telephones are considered to be safe.

Emergency shelters are in the following locations:

Lower Diamond – restrooms & Concessions Stand

Upper/Youth Diamond – Upper & Baseball restrooms & Upper Concession Stand