

Misericordia University Weather Safety Policy

When the National Weather Service declares a severe weather warning in the Wilkes-Barre area or when the Misericordia University Administration closes the Institution due to inclement weather, all athletic competitions and practices are halted until the severe weather warning has been lifted and the institution reopens. Our lightning policy is in accordance with the *2004-2005 NCAA Sports Medicine Handbook*.

Heat Exposure

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| 1. Apparent Temperature below 90°F: | No need to modify activity plan. |
| 2. Apparent Temperature 91°F – 104°F: | Increase fluid and rest breaks. Monitor athletes for heat cramps and heat illness. Be aware of danger signs. |
| 3. Apparent Temperature 105°F – 129°F: | Restricted practice. Decrease exercise intensity. Continue to monitor athletes for heat cramps and heat illness. Be aware of danger signs. |
| 4. Apparent Temperature 130°F and up: | Suspend practice. Very high risk of heat illness exists. |

Q: What is *apparent temperature*?

A: Apparent temperature is a measurement of the actual temperature in relation to the humidity, which is an indicator for how the weather feels to the human body. With this measurement and by using the scale above, College Misericordia certified athletic trainers can determine when practice can and cannot take place because of weather.

Cold Exposure

For practices and competition in temperatures below 32°F, it is advisable to add one layer of protective clothing for every five (5) mph of wind.

Lightning Safety

A member of the athletic training staff will monitor the weather and make the decision to notify the head coach or officials of dangerous situations and recommend the suspension of activity in the event of lightning. If an athletic trainer is not in attendance, the supervising coach has the ability to suspend activity. The decision to suspend activity is based on:

- Two consistent readings from the SkyScan lighting and storm detector in the 8–20 mile range, regardless of the presence of visible lightning. This portable device will be in the possession of the athletic training staff or the supervising coach.
- The utilization of the **Flash-to-Bang Method** to determine lightning distance.
 - Count the number of seconds between the time lightning is sighted to the time that thunder is heard.
 - Divide the number of seconds by five to determine the distance of lightning in miles.

The [NCAA](#) and the [NSSL](#) have set a minimum guideline of 30 seconds for a flash-to-bang ratio (6 miles). Should the flash-to-bang ratio fall below 30 seconds, competition/practice will be stopped for a minimum of 30 minutes following the most recent flash-to-bang that is below 30 seconds. Once it is determined that there is danger of a lightning strike, the athletic training staff will notify the head coach or officials to immediately remove all athletes and personnel from the playing fields and into the nearest enclosed grounded structure.