

# **WAA Girls Softball Lightning Guidelines**

## **Basic facts about lightning according to the National Weather Services National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.**

- Each year in the United States more than four hundred people are struck by lightning. On average about 70 people each year are killed.
- All thunderstorms produce lightning and are dangerous!
- Lightning often strikes outside the area of heavy rain and may strike as far as 10 miles from any rainfall.
- If you hear thunder you are in danger.

## **To avoid exposure to the risks of lightning take the following precautions.**

- Avoid open areas. Lightning tends to strike taller objects. Stay away from trees, towers, utility poles, sheds, small or open shelters, dugouts and bleachers.
- Cars with hard tops are very safe although avoid touching any metal.

## **If you feel your hair stand on end this may indicate lightning is about to strike-**

- Crouch down on the balls of your feet put your hands over your ears and bend your head down. Do not lie flat on ground.

## **What to do if someone is struck by lightning.**

- Call for help! 911
- Lightning victims do not carry an electrical charge, are safe to handle and need immediate medical attention!

- Give first aid. Cardiac arrest is the immediate cause of death in lightning fatalities.
- If possible move the victim to a safer place; lightning **CAN** strike the same place twice.

### **Procedure to clear fields in case of lightning.**

- There will be two (2) three (3) second blasts on air horn.
- All coaches, players, officials and fans will leave the fields and take shelter in their cars.
- When the weather system has passed and the decision has been made to resume play (*30 minutes after last lightning sighting*), one three (3) second blast of the air horn will be sounded to return to the fields.
- If games are cancelled two (2) three (3) second blasts will sound and all participants must leave the park.
- The decision to clear the fields will be made by the umpire on hand.
- If no umpire is on hand the decision will be made by the WAA representative in charge at the time.

**The girl's safety is first!**  
**There is no wrong decision.**