

BRYANSTON HIGH SCHOOL LIGHTNING POLICY

Purpose

1. To provide staff, students, parents, contractors and visitors to the school with accurate information regarding the status of a prevailing storm, and to give them enough warning to be able to take shelter.

System

2. The School has installed a lightning prediction system that is operational between 06:00 and 21:00 Mondays to Sundays.
3. A Weather Intelligent Systems Portal is installed on the school premises. It warns of actual lightning activity within a 10km radius of the School from data provided by the South African Weather Service. It operates on an automatic warning system. Messages are created for storm and lightning events that intersect within the specified area of observation around the school and are sent automatically to the lightning warning unit onsite. Once this message is received, the siren will sound (one long blast) and strobe light situated at the pavilion will flash intermittently.
4. The system is structured such that if after 30 minutes the storm has dissipated, the all clear siren will sound. However, if there is still storm / lightning activity in the area, the siren will sound again. If after a further 30 minutes on no storm activity, the siren will sound the final all clear (two short blasts) and normal activities may resume.
5. Storm and lightning activity can be monitored via the Africa Weather Service WeatherGuard app by any authorised school official (educator or coach). This information may be used to assess weather conditions and make an informed decision regarding the cancellation of an event due to adverse weather. However, once the siren has sounded, all activities must cease immediately and shelter must be sought without delay..

Procedures to follow

6. When the siren signals once (one long siren) it indicates that there is imminent danger from lightning.
7. In the event of the siren signalling once:
 - 7.1. All persons outdoors on the school property are to seek shelter immediately. Only buildings (constructed of brick) are to be used as a suitable shelter. The shelter at the Home Zone has been earthed and are considered safe from a lightning strike; however, metal upright poles should never be touched during a storm.
 - 7.2. All sports activities taking place in any external venue (fields, swimming pools, courts etc.) are to be stopped immediately and all players, sports officials and spectators are required to seek appropriate shelter. Failure to comply with this requirement by any employee or registered learner of the school may result in disciplinary action.
8. Any competitive game so stopped by the threat of lightning shall be considered a game suspended due to poor weather.
9. Any external agencies using any School facilities will be informed of this policy by the School employee involved in arranging the use of the facilities. Failure to inform such external agency by the employee will be considered in a serious light.
10. The siren will signal twice (two short sirens) indicating that all is clear for the time being and that external activities may resume.
11. It is acknowledged that lightning is a natural environmental hazard beyond human control, and while the School has taken these measures to minimise the risk of lightning damage or injury, no guarantees against injury or damage can be given and accordingly the School can carry no liability whatsoever should any person be injured, or property be damaged due to a lightning strike.

Operating the Lightning Predictor

12. The predictor operates on an automatic system of warning unless the procedures for the manual operation of the alarm are followed.
13. Manual operation of the alarm:
 - 13.1. The alarm may be required to be operated manually if the automated warning system is faulty. In this case, the Headmaster or his / her designated staff member will sound the siren manually either for warning of storm / lightning activity or for the all clear.
 - 13.2. The Headmaster may also determine any event, day or series of events during which the alarm will be manually operated.
 - 13.3. Any member of staff may make a request to the Headmaster for the system to be manually operated.
 - 13.4. The Headmaster will appoint a staff member to manually operate the alarm (the designated staff member). This may apply only to the sounding of the "all-clear" if appropriate.
 - 13.5. The designated staff member will then decide about manually signalling the alarm and the all-clear, based on all relevant information on hand.
 - 13.6. The designated staff member is responsible for ensuring the system returns to automatic operation when the period of manual operation is completed.

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