



## GOVERNOR'S DIVISION OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

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*For immediate release:*

### **DELAY THE GAME WHEN THUNDERSTORMS APPROACH**

AUSTIN – Sports fields are dangerous places to be during thunderstorms. That's why the National Weather Service and the Governor's Division of Emergency Management urge Texans to delay the game when thunderstorms approach.

Sports fields are large, open areas where you and your companions may be the tallest objects. Metal bleachers, fences, light poles and goal posts attract lightning. When lightning hits these objects, the charge travels along the object, potentially injuring anyone in contact with the metal. Lightning can bounce off any of these objects and strike people nearby.

Schools, athletic programs, day care centers and summer camps, as well as coaches, referees and parents participating in field events need to understand the dangers of lightning. They should be prepared to suspend games and move the players and spectators inside nearby buildings or into cars and buses until the storm threat passes.

The Governor's Division of Emergency Management offers the following lightning safety tips.

- If you can hear thunder, you are close enough to be struck by lightning.
- If you are outdoors with no shelter available, stay low.
- Move away from hills and high places, and avoid tall, isolated trees.
- Do not touch metal objects, such as tennis rackets, baseball bats, or golf clubs.
- Do not ride bicycles, or lean against fences or metal sheds.
- Do not lean against a car or truck -- get inside the vehicle quickly.
- If you feel your hair suddenly stand on end, it means you may be a lightning target. Crouch low on the balls of your feet and try not to touch the ground with your knees or hands.
- Avoid wet areas that can conduct the lightning charge.



For more information, contact GDEM Public Information at 512.424.2138 or visit GDEM's Web site: [www.txdps.state.tx.us/dem](http://www.txdps.state.tx.us/dem).