

POLICY AND PROCEDURE: LIGHTNING AND THUNDER SAFETY

DEFINITIONS

- **Lightning** - an electrical discharge that results from the buildup of positive and negative charges within a thunderstorm. When the buildup becomes strong enough, lightning appears as a "bolt." This flash of light usually occurs within or between, the clouds and the ground. When a lightning bolt occurs, the air surrounding its channel is instantaneously heated to as much as 50,000° F.
- **Thunder** - Sound accompanying lightning; produced by violent expansion of air due to intense heating by a lightning discharge.
- **Foundation Staff** – a person employed by the Genesee Foundation. This includes, but not limited to, Aquatics Director, lifeguards, office, maintenance, and open space staff.
- **Genesee Outdoor facilities** - Trails, tennis courts, swimming pools, playing fields, playgrounds, etc.
- **Impacted activities** – any organized Genesee Foundation or club/team activity held outdoors on Foundation property.

POLICY

To ensure the safety of residents, guests, and visitors while outdoors, the Foundation will temporarily suspend organized outdoor activities for at least 30 minutes and direct those affected people to a protected shelter inside when lightning is detected in the area.

Types of Impacted Activities- Any organized outdoor activity using Foundation facilities

- **Community wide – social** (examples: trash mash, 4th of July)
- **Recreational teams** (examples: swim team, interclub tennis)
- **Recreational facilities** (examples: pools, tennis courts, trails, playgrounds)

PROCEDURES

- When Foundation Staff are scheduled to work outdoors, they will be responsible for monitoring approaching lightning, weather forecasts, and observing the sky. If a Foundation Staff Member is not available, it is the responsibility of the activity leadership or resident to adhere to this policy.
- If lightning is seen anywhere in the sky, or thunder is heard, the Foundation Staff will immediately clear all residents, guests, and visitors from the outdoor facility for at least 30 minutes from last occurrence of lightning or thunder. This needs to be communicated to other facilities immediately. If one facility is closed, the other ones are closed.

POOLS

- The Aquatics Director has final authority on outdoor pool facility closures. If the Aquatics Director is not on duty, the lifeguard at Vista has final authority.
- Any disagreement with a facility closure should be referred to the Foundation Office. After hours, staff can call Aquatics Director, Community Relations Manager, or Foundation Manager.
- All Foundation Staff will be advised of this policy and procedures. Staff will assist in clearing residents, guests, and visitors from outdoors to inside buildings.
- After 30 minutes from the last lightning or thunder, the other facilities need to be notified of the all clear prior to resident notification. The Aquatics Director or Vista Lifeguard will announce it is all clear and reopen the facility. If one facility reopens, they all reopen.
- If the outdoor facility closure lasts for more than 1 hour, Aquatics Director will determine if facilities will close for the day. If Aquatics Director is not on duty, the Vista lifeguard will make the decision with consultation from Aquatics Manager.

ENFORCEMENT

Enforcement shall be through Foundation Aquatic Staff, voluntary cooperation of residents, and the leadership of the impacted activities. Facility Use Agreements shall be created and signed for all activities that use major recreational facilities (swimming pools, tennis courts). All organized activities using the Foundation's outdoor facilities must adhere to this policy.