



ST STITHIANS COLLEGE LIGHTNING POLICY

Purpose

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

System

2. The College 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 campus. It warns of actual lightning activity within a 10km radius of the College 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 a specified area of observation and are sent automatically to the lightning prediction unit on campus. Once this message is received, the siren will sound.
4. The system is structured such that if after 15 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 again sound the alarm. If after a further 15 minutes on no storm activity, the siren will sound the final all clear and normal activities may resume.
5. A storm / lightning can be monitored on the South Africa Weather Service's website and the designated person at a particular event can track these weather conditions and provide information to the Head / Manager of the event, who can then make an informed decision about whether or not to cancel the event due to bad weather. However, once the siren has sounded the alarm, shelter is to be sought immediately. Training on this system can be provided by the Operations Director.

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 campus are to seek shelter immediately. Only school buildings (constructed of brick) are considered to be a suitable shelter. The shelters at the Aquatic Centre have 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, 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 College 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 College facilities will be informed of this policy by the College 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 understood that lightning is an Act of God, and while the College 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 College can carry no liability whatsoever should any person be injured or property be damaged due to a lightning strike.

Aquatics Centre

12. The Aquatics Centre has been fitted with a siren (more clearly audible for those in the pool area) and which is linked to a light (makes users of the pool area more aware that there is

lightning within the 10km radius of the school in the event that the siren was not heard). In the event that the siren sounds for lightning, the light (mounted above the entrance to the girls' change room) will go red. When the all clear siren sounds, the light will go off and normal activities can resume.

Operating the Lightning Predictor

13. The predictor operates on an automatic system of warning unless the procedures for the manual operation of the alarm are followed.
14. Manual operation of the alarm:
 - 14.1. The alarm may be required to be operated manually in the event that the automated warning system is faulty. In this case, the Rector or his / her designated staff member will sound the siren manually either for warning of storm / lightning activity or for the all clear.
 - 14.2. The Rector may also determine any event, day or series of events during which the alarm will be manually operated.
 - 14.3. Any member of staff may make a request to the Rector for the system to be manually operated.
 - 14.4. The Rector 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.
 - 14.5. The designated staff member, will then make a decision about manually signalling the alarm and the all-clear.
 - 14.6. 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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Author: Operations Director