Managers and Coaches,

The RLL season is upon us and we wanted to remind you what the Little League guidelines are regarding thunder and lightning situations. We cannot stress the importance of following these guidelines and acting IMMEDIATELY when the situation arises.

Thunder and Lightning Position Statement - Lightning / Inclement Weather Guidelines

\*\* If thunder and/or lightning can be heard and/or seen, stop activity and seek protective shelter immediately. The best shelter is indoors, the next best is in a car and if that is not possible avoid standing under tall trees or poles \*\*

\*\* In situations where thunder and /or lighting may or may not be present yet you feel your hair stand on end and skin tingle, immediately assume the following crouched position: Drop to your knees, place your hands/arms on your legs and lower your head. Do not lie flat. This phenomenon means you are in immediate danger of a lightning strike\*\*

\*\* In the event that either situation should occur, allow 30 minutes to pass after the last sound of thunder and/or lightning strike prior to resuming play. If after waiting a period of time you hear thunder or see lightning the clock must be reset to 30 minutes. \*\*

The National Weather Service has stated that lightning can strike up to a distance of 10 miles, with storms traveling at a speed exceeding 50 miles per hour. However, thunder can be heard only within a distance of 8 miles. Therefore, if you hear thunder and/or see lightning, you are in immediate danger and should seek protective shelter in an indoor facility at once! An indoor facility is recommended as the safest protective shelter. However, if an indoor facility is not available, an automobile or school bus is a relatively safe alternative. If neither of these is available, the following guidelines are recommended. Avoid standing under large trees and telephone poles. If the only alternative is a tree, choose a small tree in a wooded area that is not on a hill. As a last alternative, find a ravine or valley. In all instances outdoors, assume the aforementioned crouched position. Avoid standing water and metal objects at all times (i.e., steering wheel, metal bleachers, metal cleats, umbrellas, etc.) The most dangerous storms give little or no warning: thunder and lightning are not heard or seen. Up to 40% of all lightning is not accompanied by thunder and 20-40% of thunder cannot be heard because of atmospheric disturbances, thus the term "silent killer." At times, the only natural forewarning that might precede a strike is feeling you hair standing on end and skin tingle. At this point, you are in imminent danger of being struck by lightning and should drop to the ground and assume the aforementioned crouched position immediately. Do not lie flat. Should a ground strike occur near you, lying flat increases the body's surface area that is exposed to the current traveling through the ground.

The National Weather Service recommends that 30 minutes should pass after the last sound of thunder is heard and/or lightning strike is seen before resuming play. This is sufficient time to allow the storm to pass and move out of lightning strike range.

A perilous misconception that it is possible to see lightning coming and have time to act before it strikes could prove to be fatal. In reality, the lightning that we see flashing is actually the return stroke flashing upward from the ground to the cloud, not downward. When you see the lightning strike, it already has hit. It is a fact that you will never see the bolt that hits you. If used immediately, the information provided can be used to minimize the risk of injury or death from lightning.