

DOWNERS GROVE PARK DISTRICT INSTALLS LIGHTNING PREDICTION SYSTEM

The Downers Grove Park District has installed the Thor Guard Lightning Prediction System throughout the park network. The system predicts lightning strikes by measuring electrostatic charges on the ground and in the air. This system is in place at many area park districts and golf clubs, including the Lisle, Naperville and Oak Brook park districts.

The system covers a total of 19 sites selected due to high recreation or sport use. The sites are the Golf Course, Lyman Woods and Concord Square, Doerhoefer, Ebersold, Fishel, Gilbert, Hummer, Lincoln Center/Constitution, McCollum, Mar-Duke Farm, Memorial, O'Brien, Patriots, Powers, Randall, 63rd and Brookbank, Washington and Whitlock parks.

When the system predicts lightning in the area, a 15-second warning horn will sound and a strobe light will also flash until the danger has passed. Depending upon weather conditions the warning horn may be heard within a two-block radius. All activities at the parks should stop immediately when the horn sounds. Anyone who hears the horn should seek shelter immediately. Anyone who sees lightning should seek shelter immediately and not wait for the horns to sound. If the strobe light is flashing, no activities should begin until the all clear sounds and the strobe light is no longer flashing. After the threat of lightning has passed, an all-clear signal of three short horn blasts will sound and the strobe light will go off. The system is activated daily 8:30 a.m. to 11 p.m. from March through November and is tested on the first Tuesday of each month at approximately 9:55 a.m.

According to the National Weather Service, each year about 400 people in the United States are struck by lightning while involved in outdoor activities. Because lightning travels in the atmosphere, it can strike even on a sunny day. The Downers Grove Park District believes installing the Thor Guard Lightning Prediction System will benefit the whole community.

For more information about the Thor Guard Lightning Prediction System visit www.thorguard.com or call Director of Parks Gene Cromwell at (630) 963-1304.