

New lightning warning system installed in select Evanston parks

The City of Evanston's Recreation Division installed lightning prediction and warning systems at James Park and Robert Crown Park in Spring 2007. These parks are heavily used for youth sports, including baseball, softball and soccer. Administrators from the City's affiliated groups (AYSO, EBSA, etc.) received information about these systems and have been asked to pass on the information to coaches and parents in their leagues.

The warning system measures the surrounding atmosphere's electrostatic energy and warns of an impending lightning strike. If you are in the area of the warning system and conditions favorable to the creation of lightning have been detected, you will hear one 15-second blast of the horn and a strobe light will begin flashing. This signals that you must immediately seek an appropriate, safe shelter. The strobe will continue flashing until safe conditions return. You may resume activities only after three 5-second blasts of the horn are sounded and the strobe light stops flashing. If you remain outdoors after the warning is issued, you are putting yourself at serious risk.

The system will operate from 9am to 10pm seven days a week from April through November. James Park is located at Dodge Avenue at Mulford Street. Robert Crown Park is located at Dodge Avenue at Lee Street. We hope that neighbors near these parks understand the importance of these systems in protecting our park users.

For more information, please call Jim Ferrera of the Evanston Recreation Division at (847) 866-8046.