

# Intradistrict Communication

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TO: High School Principals  
High School Athletic Directors

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SUBJECT: New Stadium Lights with Flashing Capabilities

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Some high schools have recently had new stadium lighting installed that have flashing capabilities. It is imperative that prior to using this feature, the school has taken the necessary steps to ensure notification of the use of these lights, follow the expectations and be aware of the safety concerns identified by Utah State Risk Management. The district will provide required signage to be posted at the stadium when the light system is installed. Those expectations are as follows:

- **Warning Signs:** Ensuring that the appropriate warning signage is posted and visible for all patrons as they enter the stadium where flashing lights will be used.
- **Warning Announcements:** Making two announcements at each event at the beginning and again at halftime regarding the same warnings.
- **Flash Rate Limits:** OSHA suggests keeping flashing rates under 4 flashes per second to reduce seizure risks. The Epilepsy Foundation recommends a flash rate under 2 Hertz with breaks between flashes.
- **Synchronization:** If multiple strobe lights are used in the same field of view, they should be synchronized to flash together, which lowers the overall frequency of flashes and reduces the likelihood of triggering photosensitive epilepsy, according to the Epilepsy Foundation.
- **Placement and Intensity:** Strobe lights should be mounted high (above head level) and away from areas like corridors or stairs where disorientation could lead to falls. Diffusers can help soften the brightness, and light intensity should be kept as low as practical.
- **Staff Training:** Personnel should be trained to assist individuals who may experience adverse reactions to strobe lighting. Those running the lights should have training with the light manufacturer to ensure the above limits are followed and set as pre-sets for the lights.

## **Safety Concerns:**

- **Photosensitive Epilepsy-** Strobe lights, especially at certain flash frequencies (typically between 3 and 30 flashes per second), can trigger seizures in individuals with photosensitive epilepsy.
- **Visual Disorientation-** The rapid on-off cycle can disorient individuals, potentially leading to accidents, particularly in environments requiring clear visibility. This is especially concerning in areas like stairs or corridors.
- **Other Health Effects-** Strobe lights can also cause: flicker vertigo (disorientation, nausea, rapid blinking, etc.), headaches, eye strain, and general discomfort. In rare cases, prolonged exposure may lead to more severe, persistent issues.