

WRSL LIGHTNING AND SEVERE WEATHER POLICY

The safety of players, coaches, referees, management and spectators is a primary concern in any weather event that occurs during all matches sanctioned by the WRSL. The WRSL is formally adopting the policy stated in this document and will endeavour to ensure that it is followed at all times. Referees are expected to act responsibly when dealing with severe weather during matches they are controlling as waiting to stop play or not waiting to start play may result in serious injury or loss of life. However, it must be clearly understood that ultimately the referee has the final say over delaying or restarting a match due to weather. Teams directed to take proper shelter must remain in location until the referee restarts the game or declares a postponement. Failure to adhere to the referees directions during severe weather will result in forfeiture of the game by the team failing to follow the referees ruling

The existence of blue sky and absence of rain are not protection from lightning as lightning can and does strike as far as ten (10) miles away from the rain shaft (i.e. it does not have to be raining for lightning to strike). Thunder always accompanies lightning, even though its audible range can be diminished due to background noise in the immediate environment and its distance from the observer. Generally, the lightning threat diminishes with time after the last sound of thunder, but may persist for thirty (30) minutes or more.

30/30 RULE:

When lightning is detected, the distance to the lightning can be determined by counting the time between the flash and the first sound of the thunder and dividing this time by five (5). When lightning is seen, count the time until thunder is heard. If this time is thirty (30) seconds or less, seek proper shelter. Wait thirty (30) minutes or more after hearing the last thunder before leaving the shelter.

Proper Shelter

Proper shelter is a safe structure or location. A safe structure is any building normally occupied or frequently used by people (i.e. a building with plumbing and/or electrical wiring that acts to electrically ground the structure). Avoid using shower facilities as a safe structure, whether stand alone or in a building.

In the absence of a sturdy, frequently used building, any vehicle with a hard metal roof (not a convertible or golf cart) and rolled-up windows can provide a measure of safety and is definitely better than remaining outdoors.

If unable to reach safe shelter, stay away from the tallest trees or objects such as light poles or flag poles, metal objects, individual trees, standing pools of water and open fields. Avoid being the highest object in a field. Do not take shelter under a single, tall tree. Minimize contact with the ground.

For additional information refer to the CSA Lightning Safety/Severe Weather Policy which can be found on the OSA or CSA websites. Additional information can also be found on the following website: www.weatheroffice.gc.ca