

A large, faint watermark of the Regina Soccer Association logo is visible in the background. It features the text "REGINA SOCCER ASSOCIATION" in a serif font, with a soccer ball icon to the right of the text.

# Appendix 17

## Lightning & Severe Weather Policy

# Regina Soccer Association

## Lightning & Severe Weather Policy

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*"If you can see it, flee it; if you can hear it, clear it."*<sup>1</sup>

Lightning is a severe hazard that must be viewed seriously. Everyone should immediately seek shelter any time they believe lightning threatens. Postpone or suspend activity if a thunderstorm appears imminent before or during a game or practice (irrespective of whether lightning is seen or thunder is heard) until the hazard has passed. Signs of imminent thunderstorm activity are darkening clouds, high winds, and thunder or lightning activity.

1. Use the Flash-to-Bang count to determine when to go to safety. By the time the flash-to-bang count approaches **thirty seconds** all individuals should be inside a safe structure.
  - a. Flash-to-Bang: To use the flash-to-bang method, begin counting when sighting a lightning flash. Counting is stopped when the associated bang (thunder) is heard. For example, a flash-to-bang count of thirty seconds equates to a distance of six miles. Lightning has struck from as far away as 10 miles from the storm center. Dividing your count by five will determine the distance to the lightning flash (in miles).
  - b. Once activities have been suspended, wait at least thirty minutes following the last sound of thunder or lightning flash prior to resuming an activity or returning outdoors.
2. Athletes, team officials and spectators must immediately seek an appropriate safe shelter.
3. Avoid being the highest point in an open field, in contact with, or proximity to the highest point, as well as being on the open water. Do not take shelter under or near trees, flagpoles, metal fences or light poles.
4. Should you be caught in a lightning storm, assume the lightning safe position (crouch on the ground, weight on the balls of the feet, feet together, head lowered, and ears covered) for individuals who feel their hair stand on end, skin tingle, or hear "crackling" noises. Do not lie flat on the ground.

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<sup>1</sup> National Lightning Safety Institute, Louisville, CO.

5. Advise the Regina Soccer Association Office of any weather deferred games.
6. Observe the following basic first aid procedures in managing victims of a lightning strike:
  - a. Survey the scene for safety.
  - b. Activate local EMS.
  - c. Lightning victims do not 'carry a charge' and are safe to touch.
  - d. If necessary, move the victim with care to a safer location.
  - e. Evaluate airway, breathing, and circulation, and begin CPR if necessary.
  - f. Evaluate and treat for hypothermia, shock, fractures and/or burns.

**All individuals have the right to leave an athletic site in order to seek a safe structure if the person feels in danger of impending lightning activity, without fear of repercussions or penalty from anyone.**

#### Lightning Quick Facts

It takes the sound of the bang of a thunderclap five seconds to travel one mile (1.6 km), lightning flash is seen instantaneously. Therefore for every five seconds between the flash of lightning and the bang of thunder, lightning is one mile (1.6km) away. A thirty second Flash to Bang count means lightning is 6 miles (9.7 km) away.

The average length of a lightning bolt is 3-6 miles (4.8 – 9.7 km) long.

The average speed of a thunderstorm is 25 Miles/Hour, or 40 Kilometres/Hour.

Lightning can strike from a clear blue sky.

**- End of Policy -**