



The following provides our basic guidelines for dealing with lightning, windstorms, and other severe weather conditions. The peak season for severe weather occur in the United States between May and August, typically in the late afternoon and early evening. Inclement weather is defined as that which would make playing the game unsafe or a hazard to players, coaches and referees.

Lightning

Apply the 30-30 rule with regard to thunder (which can be heard) or lightning (which can be seen) the rule is that if either thunder or lightning is in the area, **THE FIELDS MUST IMMEDIATELY BE CLEARED** and all persons must immediately leave the field and seek safe shelter. Once the last thunder or lightning has cleared, teams must wait 30 minutes before resuming or starting their game. If a game will be started or resumed 45 minutes or more past its regular scheduled start time, it should be cancelled and rescheduled so as to not back up the remainder of the day's scheduled games.

Wait 30 minutes after hearing the last thunder before leaving shelter. Know and heed warning systems and community rules. Minimize the risk of being struck.

Referees must protect the safety of all participants by stopping game activities quickly, so that participants and spectators may seek a safe place before the lightning threat becomes significant. Remember, if you hear the thunder, you are within reach of lightning.

If the game has already started the referee will have been paid; if the game has not started but ends up being cancelled because of the backup to the remainder of the day's games, the referee **SHOULD** be paid. In other words, pay the referee if he/she was there to referee but due to circumstances the game could not be played. If a game is played through the conclusion of the first half, it shall be considered a completed game. Any game started but not played through the first half should be rescheduled.

Seeking proper shelter

No place outside is safe near thunderstorms. The best shelter is a large, fully enclosed, substantially constructed building. A vehicle with a solid metal roof and metal sides is a reasonable second choice.

If there is no proper shelter, avoid the most dangerous locations:

- Higher elevations
- Wide open areas, including fields
- Tall isolated objects, such as trees, poles, or light posts
- Unprotected open buildings
- Rain shelters
- Bus stops
- Metal fences and metal bleachers

If you cannot avoid these locations, crouch down on the balls of your feet, with your head tucked into your chest and your hands over your ears. Remain calm. A calm official will often be able to prevent panic by young players.

NO LIGHTNING SAFETY GUIDELINES WILL GIVE 100% GUARANTEED TOTAL SAFETY, BUT THESE STEPS WILL HELP YOU AVOID THE VAST MAJORITY OF LIGHTNING RELATED INJURIES AND CASUALTIES.

Severe storms and tornadoes

Obey local rules and heed warnings (meaning that a severe storm or tornado has been sighted.) Clear the field and seek proper shelter immediately – see above. Remember, according to standard weather warning terminology a “warning” represents a more immediately likely occurrence than a “watch.”

Hail

Stop the game, clear the field, and seek proper shelter – see above.

NO SEVERE WEATHER SAFETY GUIDELINES WILL GIVE 100% GUARANTEED TOTAL SAFETY, BUT THESE STEPS WILL HELP YOU AVOID THE VAST MAJORITY OF SEVERE WEATHER RELATED INJURIES AND CASUALTIES.