

62. WEATHER

Environmental factors regularly affect the playing of football. While environmental factors will not usually influence whether a Match should commence or continue, occasionally extremely adverse weather conditions may give rise to a need to assess whether participants are in danger. This section sets out the approach to take when assessing extreme weather conditions.

- 62.1. In the case of events of extreme weather or environmental conditions, consultation of all parties involved must take place to determine the safest outcome for all participants involved.
- 62.2. Environmental conditions that must be assessed include, but are not limited to;
 - 62.2.a. Extremely strong winds;
(wind may create additional hazards in regard to trees, branches or other material becoming projectiles)
 - 62.2.b. Flood;
(heavy rainfall also needs to be considered in relation to its impact on the safety of the playing surface)
 - 62.2.c. Extreme fire danger;
 - 62.2.d. Fires present in the vicinity;
(smoke and air quality also needs to be considered)
 - 62.2.e. Lightning;
 - 62.2.f. Hail;
(size and intensity should be considered)
 - 62.2.g. Extreme heat.
- 62.3. In the event of lightning being present in the immediate proximity of the venue during a match or training, all activity must cease, and participants are to find suitable safe shelter.
- 62.4. In the absence of specific information from a weather radar or specialised warning device, then the **30/30 Safety Guideline** should be used for all cases of thunder and lightning.

Thunder and Lightning 30/30 Safety Guideline

Lightning is the visible part of an electrical discharge. Thunder is the resulting sound from the rapid expansion of air after this discharge. Sound follows light at 0.34km/sec.
It is important to note that lightning may be obscured by clouds, so it must be assumed that when thunder is heard, lightning is in the vicinity.

If the time between the lightning flash and the thunder sound is **less than 30 seconds** then the match or training **must be suspended**.

The match or training **must not resume** until **30 minutes after** the last sighting of lightning or sound of thunder.

Blue skies and no rainfall are not reasons to breach the 30-minute minimum return-to-activity rule.

- 62.5. A decision to delay, suspend or resume a match or training session should be made in consultation with all relevant umpires, team officials and WAFC Competitions staff.
- 62.6. If a lightning threat emerges during a match, the nominated Club Official must contact all relevant parties (WAFC Competitions staff, Umpires, Spectators, Opposition Club etc) and provide updates on a regular basis.
- 62.7. If a lightning threat emerges during a match or training, all participants are to take shelter immediately.

Safe shelter

- The Primary choice is a large, fully enclosed building.
- When no building is available, a fully enclosed vehicle with a metal roof and the windows completely closed offers some protection.

Unsafe locations and situations

- An open field.
 - close vicinity to the tallest structure in the area (eg trees, light pole, goalposts).
 - Small structures such as rain/picnic shelters, tents and Coaches Boxes.
 - Umbrellas or any object that increases a person's height.
 - Use of electrical appliances such as scoreboards.
- 62.8. Any match that is abandoned due to weather conditions will be determined by the WAFC Competitions Team in line with 42.4 **Match Results**.