



ELECTRICAL STORM AND WET WEATHER GUIDELINES



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Aim of the Guidelines

The aim of these guidelines is to provide guidance for protecting the health of those participating in Touch Football from the potentially ill effects of electrical storms and wet weather, while ensuring that play is not unnecessarily interrupted.

It is expected that participants, staff and volunteers take care when competing in wet weather or extreme conditions. At a bare minimum, competition management should constantly remind players, officials and spectators about the existence of this document so that they are familiar with the processes in place should conditions deteriorate.

Disclaimer

The information in these guidelines is general. Reading or using these guidelines is not the same as getting medical advice from your doctor or health professional. All reasonable attempts have been made to ensure the information is accurate. However, TFA is not responsible for any loss, injury, claim or damage that may result from using or applying the information in these guidelines.

Background

Touch Football is a year-round sport with various weather conditions impacting competition venues. These guidelines seek to provide recommendations for Touch Football competitions and events while ensuring that the safety and well-being of participants is at the forefront of decision making. At all times, competition management must take a common-sense approach in relation to conditions being dangerous or unsafe for play.





HEAVY RAIN



During periods of rainfall, competition management should monitor the weather forecasts in relation to rainfall. Competition management are encouraged to keep an open line of communication with participants and to inspect the fields to determine the condition of the ground.

- » Competition management may determine prior to the day(s) of the game that the fields are not safe to play, in which case this should be communicated to the relevant stakeholders.
- » Competition management may also issue a directive that the conditions of the fields means that only certain fixtures will go ahead.
- » If on the day of competition, competition management or the referees inspect the ground and determine it is not safe to proceed, the match is to be abandoned. The decision to abandon a match based on the condition of the ground is at the sole and absolute discretion of competition management in consultation with relevant stakeholders.
- » Coaches and support staff are responsible for determining whether the condition of the field is safe for the purpose of training. In arriving at a decision, consultation should occur with administrative staff and the groundsman as to whether training will impact on the long-term health of the fields.



LIGHTNING AND THUNDER

Lightning poses a real risk of death or serious injury to individuals playing touch football outdoors. Lightning is the visible part of an electrical discharge, while thunder is the resulting sound from the rapid expansion of the air after this electrical discharge. Sound follows light at 0.34 km/sec.

Check the forecast and watch the sky. Darkening skies, flashes or lightning, or increasing wind may indicate an approaching storm. Lightning safety tips:

1. Use the 30/30 Lightning Guideline
 - a. If the time between the lightning flash and the thunder sound is less than 30 seconds then play should be suspended as the lightning is within 10km of your location
 - b. Play should not resume until a minimum of 30 minutes after the last thunder
2. Find safe shelter
 - a. Sturdy buildings are the safest place to be during lightning storms.
 - b. Avoid sheds, picnic shelters, metal coaching boxes and goals.
 - c. Staying in a car with windows closed also offers some protection.



Note: Thunder is not usually heard 24-32 kilometres from the lightning strike.



HAIL



All hailstorms present some risk to players in an open playing field, and the size and intensity of the storm can change dramatically in a short period of time. All play should be suspended during hailstorms so that players and officials can seek suitable shelter. It is important to also be aware of any significant temperature drop, rainfall and increased wind that may be associated with the hail conditions.

Play should be restarted after the hail has stopped falling, with particular attention being given to the amount of ice on the playing surface (size and thickness of layer). In some cases, it may be unsafe to resume play immediately due to an ice-covered surface. Deferral of the restart to allow melting (or manual clearing in parts) should be considered in extreme circumstances.

