



NIAGARAFALLS SOCCERCLUB

Lightning Safety & Severe Weather Policy

⚡ When Thunder Roars, Go Indoors!

Player, coach, and spectator safety is our top priority during any weather event. This policy outlines procedures and safety recommendations during lightning and severe weather conditions affecting NFSC-sanctioned programming.

Overview

- Matches and training sessions may be **delayed, suspended, or cancelled** due to severe weather, including thunderstorms and lightning.
- The **referee** (for games) or **on-site Technical/Club Staff** (for training) has the **final authority** to delay or restart play.
- The goal is always to **err on the side of caution** to prevent injury or loss of life.

Lightning Safety Guidelines

If You Hear Thunder, You're Close Enough to Be Struck

- **Seek shelter immediately** if thunder is heard or lightning is seen.
- **Stay indoors** for **at least 30 minutes** after the last clap of thunder or visible lightning flash.

The 30/30 Rule

- **See lightning?** Count the seconds until you hear thunder.
 - If it's **30 seconds or less**, lightning is dangerously close—**stop all activity and seek shelter**.
- **Wait 30 minutes** after the last sound of thunder before resuming activities.

Safe Shelter Locations

Safe options:

- A **fully enclosed building** with plumbing and wiring.
- A **hard-top vehicle** (not a convertible) with the windows closed.

Not safe:

- Tents, picnic shelters, pavilions, or dugouts.
- Under trees, near metal fences, poles, or bleachers.

What to Do If Caught Outside

If shelter is not available:

- **Avoid open fields, tall trees, and metal objects.**
- **Crouch down** on the balls of your feet, keep your feet close together, and place your hands over your ears. Minimize contact with the ground.
- **Do NOT lie flat.**

Large Group Considerations

For tournaments or events:

- Evacuation times are longer, so **lightning observed further away** may still require play stoppage.
- Pre-identify nearby safe shelters and factor in how long it takes to reach them.

Resuming Activity

- Resume games or training **only after 30 minutes** have passed since the **last thunder or lightning**.
- Organizers or referees will give the all-clear based on current conditions and safety assessments.

First Aid for Lightning Victims

- **Lightning victims do not carry an electrical charge** and can be safely touched.
- Call **9-1-1 immediately**.
- Begin **CPR** if necessary; use an **AED** if available.
- Move the victim to a safe area before providing aid.

Resources for Further Information

- [Environment Canada – Lightning Safety](#)
- [Weather Office – Lightning Information](#)

Everyone—coaches, referees, players, and families—should stay alert and aware of changing weather conditions. Lightning can strike even under clear skies, so it's important to take every thunder or lightning event seriously. By acting quickly and following these safety protocols, we can help ensure the well-being of all participants at NFSC.

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