

# SICOA 30 / 30 Lightning & Rain Delay Policy

The purpose of the 30/30 Lightning Policy will be to protect the health and safety of the athletes, coaches, game officials and fans at all times. Lightning is an important cause of weather related injuries and is often underrated.

This lightning safety policy includes that the home grounds' administrator and/or the game official have the authority to stop or postpone games from starting / continuing.

Suspension and resumption of play should follow the "30/30" rule: play should stop when the flash to-bang count is 30 seconds, and should not resume until 30 minutes after the last lightning. It is important to emphasize that blue skies and lack of rainfall are not adequate reasons to breach the 30-minute return-to-play rule.

The "30/30" rule is implemented nationwide for lightning safety and serves as a guide for the suspension and subsequent resumption of outdoor activities including football games.

The first part of this rule (a flash-to-bang count of 30 seconds) is a guide to the suspension of activity. The flash-to-bang count is one of the most practical techniques for estimating the distance to lightning activity. It is based on the fact that light travels faster than sound. Given that sound travels at a speed of about one kilometer every three seconds, the time that elapses between the flash of lightning and clap of thunder can be divided by three to give a measure of how far away the storm is in kilometers

The overall message is to seek shelter when the lightning activity is too close, but how do we define what is meant by too close? Currently, most experts agree that the accepted "safe" distance is no less than 6 miles. This means that as the flash-to-bang count approaches 30 seconds, all people at risk should be seeking or already inside safe shelters.

The second part of the 30/30 rule provides the criteria for resumption of play. The policy is that people wait 30 minutes after the last sight of lightning or sound of thunder. This figure is based on the observation that a typical storm moves at about 40 km/h. Thus, waiting 30 minutes allows the thunderstorm to be about 20 km (12 miles) away, minimizing the probability of a nearby strike.

## ***Safe structures***

- Large/substantial building (with electric and telephone wiring and plumbing to provide a safe pathway for the current to the ground).

## ***Unsafe locations and situations***

- Open field.
- Close vicinity to the tallest structure in an area (e.g. tree, communication tower, light pole).
- Umbrellas or any other object that increases an individual's height.

## ***The "30/30" rule Procedure***

- A flash-to-bang count of 30 seconds indicates that lightning is 10 km away. This is associated with significant risk that the next strike could be at your field location. Thus, game should be suspended, field should be immediately cleared and all individuals moved to designated safe shelters.

- Wait 30 minutes after the last lightning or thunder before considering recommencing play. After 30 minutes, game officials and host / visiting administrators will meet to decide if it is now clear to re-enter the field. If it is determined that play may begin / continue, teams will be advised and given ample time to return to the field, properly stretch and warm-up and game officials will commence play.

If after the initial 30 minutes, the conditions are not favorable to play, another 30 minute clock will start. The game now must be played / resumed during the second 30 minute delay. If after the second thirty minute delay, conditions are not favorable, the game shall be abandoned with re-scheduling done by both home and visiting administrators at a date and time available. Regardless, no game may be delayed due to lightning more than sixty (60) minutes total.

## ***Rain Delay***

There are no provisions in delaying the start of or continuing any game due to rain without lightning. The only exceptions would be if game officials / home management deem the field unsafe or host management decides that damage to the field by playing would be costly in order to replace sod or repair for future events.