

Weather Related Procedure

WEATHER RELATED PROCEDURE – THUNDER & LIGHTNING

To check if a storm is coming or going from where you are standing apply the 'flash to bang' principle, counting as soon as the lightning flash is seen until the thunder is heard. 'Flash to bang' is based on the following facts:

1. Sound travels at 330 meters per second or at 1 km in 3 seconds (approximately 1 mile every 5 seconds).
2. Light travels at 300,000 km per second.
3. Lightning will always be seen before thunder is heard.

To calculate how far away the storm is, divide the number of seconds between seeing the flash and hearing thunder by 3, to find the distance in kilometres.

If the distance between the thunder and lightning increases over a couple of strikes, the storm is moving away from you. If it decreases, it is coming towards you.

Where the timing between thunder and lightning is less than 30 seconds, the venue's lightning guidance should be followed in the first instance. Where there is no guidance in place, then England Hockey's procedure is to be followed.

Procedure Implementation:

- a) On determination that thunder and lightning is a live risk (i.e. the 'flash to bang' time is greater than 30 seconds), the following actions should be taken.
 - i. The Host Club shall provide the opposition, and any relevant personnel, updates on the weather position at least every **30 minutes**.
 - ii. The Host Club to consider player / spectator safety, including preparation for evacuation if necessary.
 - iii. The Host Club to consider stopping the match.
- b) On determination that thunder and lightning is a high risk (i.e. the 'flash to bang' time is less than 30 seconds) the following actions should be taken.

- i. The Club shall provide the opposition updates, and any relevant personnel, on the weather position at least every **15 minutes**.
- ii. The Host Club to prioritise player / spectator safety, and begin to evacuate or move to a place of safety.
- iii. The Host Club to halt the match. Play should not restart until the high risk has been removed (i.e. the 'flash to bang' time is less than 30 seconds).

Guidance:

- Do not waste time gathering kit bags from the pitch.
- Ideally, seek shelter inside a large building (pitch side dug outs are not safe enough) or a motor vehicle keeping away from, and getting out of wide, open spaces and exposed hilltops.
- The inside of a car is a safe place to be in a storm, lightning will spread over the metal of the vehicle before earthing to the ground through the tyres.
- Do not shelter beneath tall or isolated trees, it has been estimated that one in four people struck by lightning are sheltering under trees.
- If you are exposed to the elements with nowhere to shelter, make yourself as small a target as possible by crouching down with your feet together, hands on knees and your head tucked in. This technique keeps as much of you off the ground as possible.

In case of an emergency:

If someone is hit by lightning, call emergency services – they will need help as soon as possible. If you know first-aid, apply it – you will not receive an electric shock. A lightning strike is rarely instantly fatal. Following a strike, victims' hearts and/or breathing may stop, however, quick application of CPR may save their life.

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