

## Weather Guidelines for Perrysburg Referees

Use these guidelines with common sense. Remember, safety is your first priority.

### Lightning

- A. Recognize the threat
  - 1) Apply the 30-30 rule: If the time between a lightning bolt and its thunder is 30 seconds or less, **stop the game and send everybody off the field.** Wait 30 minutes after seeing the last lightning and hearing the last thunder before resuming play. The decision to play in this situation is to be made by the referee, not the coach or parents. If unsure, call the referee commissioner.
  - 2) Know and apply the rules or procedures established by the PYSA.
  - 3) Referees must protect the safety of all participants by stopping game activities quickly, so that participants and spectators may move to a safer place before the lightning threat becomes significant. **If you can hear thunder, you are within reach of lightning.**
  - 4) If you are not sure, always err on the side of caution.
- B. Seek proper shelter
  - 1) No place outside is safe during thunderstorms
  - 2) The best shelter is a large, fully enclosed, substantially constructed building. A vehicle with a solid metal roof and metal sides is a reasonable second choice.
  - 3) A covered picnic area is not safe shelter during a thunderstorm.
- C. Avoid dangerous locations:
  - 1) Higher elevations
  - 2) Wide open areas, including fields
  - 3) Tall isolated objects, such as trees or poles.
  - 4) Unprotected open buildings (like covered picnic areas)
  - 5) Metal fences and metal bleachers
- D. If someone is hit by lightning, remember most deaths from lightning result from cardiac arrest and stopped breathing. CPR and mouth-to-mouth resuscitation, respectively, are the recommended first aid. Referees should become involved in such assistance only if they have proper training. Call 911.
- E. Remain calm. A calm referee will often be able to prevent panic by young players.

### Other types of severe weather

- A. **Severe storms or tornadoes:** If the Wood County storm warning sirens go off (meaning that a severe storm or tornado has been sighted), clear the field and seek proper shelter immediately.
- B. **Hail:** Stop the game, clear the field, and seek proper shelter immediately

### Heavy rain

- A. If a heavy rain storm hits during a game, take into consideration the age of the players before making a decision to suspend the game and take shelter.
- B. If the situation is not hazardous to the players, continue play.
- C. Keep your eyes on the sky for conditions to change.

### Light rain

- A. If a light rain is falling, continue play.
- B. Keeping in mind the age of the players, if conditions become hazardous suspend play.
- C. Keep your eyes on the sky for conditions to change.

If there is a possibility of severe weather, the referees should discuss these guidelines in their pregame meeting and ensure that all officials have a clear understanding of their respective duties. If such conditions develop only after a match has begun, the referees should take the first stoppage opportunity to quickly review these matters. A brief word to the coaches regarding steps the referees will take to ensure player safety in threatening weather conditions would be useful.

If severe weather has been in the area or is forecast, referees should call the referee commissioner to see if the game has been cancelled.

If a referee has to terminate a game on the field do to weather, they must advise both coaches to call their commissioner about rescheduling the game. As soon as a telephone is available, the referees also must call the referee assignor to let him know about the termination.

If both teams are at the game site and ready to play, or the game was started, the referees should have their game sheets filled out by both coaches so they can be paid.

Referees make all decisions on the field and the final decision on possible hazardous conditions rest with the referee. If you are unsure, always err on the side of caution and suspend the game.