

LIGHTNING GUIDELINES

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Netball Victoria commonly receives requests from affiliates looking for guidance on queries such as:

- Should our training be modified or cancelled?
- At what point do we modify or cancel games?
- When is it safe to play netball?

To help organisations, coaches and other individuals when conducting sport in such conditions, Netball Victoria has produced this set of guidelines. These guidelines are not binding; however, Netball Victoria reminds all parties that they must act responsibly. We encourage a common-sense approach and consideration of the comfort and well-being of all individuals including participants, officials and volunteers.

There are many factors to be considered when Clubs, Associations and Leagues are contemplating modifying, postponing, or cancelling games or training. Affiliates need to be aware of the difficulty of settling a "one size fits all" policy in this area. Instead, we encourage you to undertake appropriate risk management specific to your geographical circumstances.

If lightning is predicted, we encourage you to communicate and plan your day in advance accordingly, so you and your members know what to expect. Inform them that changes may be made.

Netball Victoria supports the '30/30' rule which will be enacted for lightning safety and serves as a guide for activities cancellation and subsequent resumption.

30/30 LIGHTNING SAFETY GUIDELINE

Stop play if the time between seeing a lightning flash and hearing thunder is less than 30 seconds. Immediately seek safety under appropriate shelter.

Do not resume play until at least 30 minutes has passed since the last thunder was heard.

When should activities be stopped?

The '30/30' rule is not an absolute rule. A storm may move very quickly, or not generate any lightning or thunder until it is very close or topographical or wind conditions may prevent sound from travelling to your position. These conditions are especially common in hilly areas. It is important that match officials observe weather conditions and be alert to the possibility of the above occurring.

- If you see lightning
- If you hear thunder
- If the skies look threatening

Where should people go for safe shelter?

There is no place outside that is safe when a thunderstorm is in the area. Stop the activity immediately and get to a safe place immediately. Substantial buildings with wiring and plumbing provide the greatest amount of protection. Once inside, stay away from windows and doors and anything that conducts electricity such as corded phones, wiring, plumbing, and anything connected to these. **Note that small outdoor buildings including dugouts, rain shelters, sheds, etc., are NOT SAFE.** In the absence of a substantial building, a hard-topped metal vehicle with the windows closed provides good protection.

When should activities be resumed?

Because electrical charges can linger in clouds after a thunderstorm has seemingly passed, experts agree that people should wait at least 30 minutes after the last thunder before resuming outdoor activities.

Who should monitor the weather and make decisions?

Lightning safety plans should specify that someone be designated to monitor the weather for lightning. The lightning monitor should not be the coach, umpire, or referee, because these people will be busy and can't adequately monitor conditions. The lightning monitor must know the plan's guidelines and be empowered to assure that the guidelines are followed.

What should be done if someone is struck by lightning?

Most victims can survive a lightning strike; however, they need immediate medical attention. Call 000. Victims do not carry an electrical charge. In many cases, the victim's heart and/or breathing may have stopped. CPR or an AED may be needed to revive them. Continue to monitor the victim until medical help arrives. If possible, move the victim to a safer place inside away from the threat of another lightning strike.

Reference: [Bureau of Meteorology](#), [First Aid Pro – Lightning Strikes](#).