

Danger from Lightning

You should be aware that if you are on a golf course during lightning activity there is a very real danger of being struck by lightning.

If you believe there is a danger from lightning, you should stop play immediately and seek shelter.

When club officials are made aware of lightning activity in the area, they may decide to suspend play. The following Suspension of Play siren codes are used to notify players of a suspension of play:

- Discontinue play immediately – One 3 second blast, repeated once after 30 seconds
- Discontinue play – Three 1 second blasts, repeated once after 30 seconds
- Continue play – Two 1 second blasts, repeated once after 30 seconds

(These codes are also displayed on the back of the scorecard for quick reference.)

All players are required under the Terms of the Competition to immediately comply with any warnings given and are strongly urged to follow the advice given below. Players who suspend play on their own initiative may resume when they believe it is safe unless that Committee has subsequently suspended play.

Important Information

When you believe there is danger from lightning you should not wait for the committee to suspend play. You should not rely on the committee to suspend play. Firstly, there is no guarantee a member of the match committee will be in a position to suspend play (they may all be out on the course with you). Secondly, the danger from lightning is better determined on the spot, rather than in the clubhouse, possibly over a kilometre away from where you are on the course.

You should take advantage of Rule 5.7a which allows a player to discontinue play when “he or she reasonably believes there is danger from lightning but must report to the Committee as soon as possible”.

When a thunderstorm threatens, get inside a home or large building, or inside an all-metal vehicle (certainly not a golf buggy). This may not be practical when you are playing golf, therefore you should take action as soon as you recognise the danger.

If there is no time to reach a safe building or a vehicle, follow these rules:

1. Do not stand underneath a natural lightning rod such as a tall, isolated tree.
2. Avoid being the highest object in the surrounding landscape. E.g. don't stand on a hilltop, on a tee surrounded by open water or on an open fairway.
3. Get away from tractors and other metal course equipment.
4. Get off and away from golf carts, motorcycles, scooters, and away from your golf clubs.
5. Stay away from wire fences, metal pipes, rails and other metallic pathways that could carry lightning to you from some distance away.
6. Avoid standing in small isolated sheds or other small structures in open areas.
7. In the trees, seek shelter in a low area under a thick growth of small trees.
8. In open areas, go to a low place such as a gully.
9. If in a group spread out, keeping people several metres apart.
10. If you're hopelessly isolated in a level paddock and you feel your hair stand on end, indicating that lightning is about to strike – crouch down, feet close together with your head tucked down. Do not lie flat on the ground.