

Jamberoo Touch Incorporated

Lightning Policy

1. AIM

The aim of this policy is to prevent injuries or death related to lightning strikes by informing players of the risks and identifying procedures for removing players from harm.

2. BACKGROUND FACTS

- The Federal Emergency Management Agency estimates there are 20 deaths and 450 severe injuries from lightning each year in Australia¹.
- Lightning deaths are preventable by taking proper precautions.
- Sound travels at about 1 kilometre every 3 seconds. Count the time between the lightning flash and the bang of the thunder and divide by three to get the distance away in kilometres.
- For example, 30 seconds is approximately 10km.
- Half of successive lightning flashes are around 9km apart².
- Lightning often strikes as far as 15 km away from any rainfall. Many deaths from lightning occur ahead of the storm because people try and wait to the last minute before seeking shelter³.

3. POLICY

Use the 30/30 rule to assess danger:

- If lightning is observed or thunder is heard, count the time between the lightning (flash) and the thunder (bang). If the time delay is less than thirty (30) seconds then the strike was closer than 10km and the playing area should be cleared immediately.
- Seek shelter in a large permanent structure or enclosed metal vehicle
- If there is no shelter, crouch down with feet together with your head down and ears covered - preferably 20m away from solitary tall objects
- Only return to the playing field once 30 minutes has elapsed since the last lightning strike, were the time from the flash to the bang exceeded 30 seconds.
- **All players are responsible for identifying the risk and must trust the judgement of anyone who identifies the risk.**

4. FURTHER INFORMATION

- If your hair stands on end or you hear buzzing from nearby rocks, fences, etc, move immediately. At night, a blue glow may show if an object is about to be struck⁴.
- Don't touch or move close to metal structures, wire fences, goal posts or light towers.

5. FIRST AID

- If someone is struck call '000' and apply first aid techniques immediately.
- Lightning fatalities usually are caused by cardiac arrest; the lightning causes the heart to stop.
- Where necessary, apply immediate heart massage and mouth-to-mouth resuscitation (CPR) to lightning victims until medical help arrives and they will have a good chance of survival.
- There is no threat of electrocution through bodily contact with someone who has been struck by lightning.

Footnotes

1. <http://www.strikealert.com.au/lightningfacts.html>
2. http://www.lightningsafety.noaa.gov/little_known_facts.htm - Little known lightning facts, National Weather Service.
3. <http://www.lightningsafety.noaa.gov/outdoors.htm> - Lightning safety outdoors, National Weather Service.
4. <http://www.bom.gov.au/info/thunder/>