

UNITED SOCCER ALLIANCE OF INDIANA Weather Guidelines, 4/27/12, revised 04/01/2021

USA of Indiana, ISL and IYS each adopted Minnesota YSA's guidelines.

As revised by USA of Indiana 11/2008 with gratitude to MYSA.

Weather conditions are the responsibility of the game officials, coaches, tournament directors and club administrators. All should be aware of the potential dangers posed by different weather conditions and work together to keep the players and other participants as safe as possible. If the weather conditions warrant, game officials and coaches should discuss before the game starts what the procedures will be to ensure the safety of the players. Tournament directors should monitor weather conditions including the warnings and watches issued by the National Weather Service. In the event of sudden changes, the tournament directors should have a means of sending warnings to the site officials. A weather plan should be provided to the participating teams to allow a clear understanding of shelter locations, evacuation plans and how the weather will affect tournament results. Club administrators should perform similar functions for league play.

Technology has improved the monitoring capability for all concerned. Weather radios are relatively inexpensive and provide virtually instant information on alerts, watches and warnings. Lightning detectors can take the guesswork out of how far away lightning is. Cell phones and two-way radios can meet communication requirements to implement weather plans.

Preliminary Concerns

UNITED SOCCER ALLIANCE OF INDIANA WILL HAVE ON SITE weather radios or internet ready cell phone or computers, and have them available for on-site monitoring. A lightning detector will also be on site and available to use. Coaches may wish to consider obtaining their own weather radios or use a cell phone weather app with lightning detector.

USA of Indiana (Rec) PLUS AND USA of Indiana competitive league play obviously involves travel. Conditions in one location may be very different from another, especially the further apart the two locations are. The coaches are responsible for keeping informed of the weather conditions at home, along their route to the game and at the game site. The coaches are also responsible for communications with the opposing coach and their own team in the event of inclement weather. Discussions between the coaches must provide for common sense to prevail. The League Representative must be informed of any games affected by inclement weather.

Tournament directors should provide participating teams with the weather guidelines for the tournament. Some things to consider are:

How are games affected? Is a game complete at the half? Half plus 1 minute? Will subsequent games be shortened? Are refunds available in the event games are cancelled for weather? How will standings be determined if some teams' games are cancelled and no time is available to make them up?

Severe Storms

Severe storms can produce high winds, hail, heavy rain, lightning and/or tornados. If a severe storm approaches the playing area, the safety of the players is the number one priority of coaches and referees and may require that the game be suspended while shelter is sought. In the event the game is suspended ALL participants MUST clear the field immediately and move into their cars or other permanent shelter.

High winds can create problems by dust and debris being in the air or blowing over objects. Hail can cause injury. Heavy rain can create hazardous field conditions or lead to flash flooding. Lightning is discussed separately. Tornados are obvious dangers of any severe storm. Use common sense and seek shelter as appropriate.

Lightning (Remember the Rule of 30/30)

Lightning is the second leading cause of storm related deaths (flooding is first). Lightning can strike up to 10 miles outside of a thunderstorm, literally a bolt from the blue. The danger from lightning can persist for 20-30 minutes or more after a thunderstorm has passed. The National Weather Service does not issue watches or warnings for lightning by itself. However, the National Weather Service does advise that if you see a lightning bolt and hear the thunder in 30 seconds or less, you must seek shelter and wait 30 minutes before resuming outdoor activity.

If a person can hear thunder, or see lightning, the danger already is present. A clear, sunny sky overhead with storm clouds nearby can still be dangerous.

Referees and Coaches should adhere to the following guidelines:

- If lightning is within 5 miles, the game(s) should be suspended and shelter sought. A lightning detector can identify the distance accurately but may not be available. A rough guideline is to **measure the time between the**

lightning flash and hearing the corresponding thunder. If it is 30 seconds or less, seek shelter. It may not be possible to determine which lightning strike generated which roll of thunder. A simple rule: **If you can hear it, clear it!**

- Shelter should be in larger, enclosed structures. Smaller, open structures, tents, trees, isolated areas, etc, should be avoided. Cars, with windows rolled up, or buses can provide good shelter. Avoid contact with metal or other conducting materials to the outside surfaces. Do not stay in open, unprotected areas.
- **Games should not be restarted for at least 30 minutes** after the last roll of thunder is heard.
- Tournaments should inform participating teams of notification and evacuation plans and shelters near the playing sites.

Cold & Hot Weather Guidelines

SEE BELOW document from Indiana Soccer Association.

Please check USA OF INDIANA WEBSITE KIDSAFE PAGES for additional information in regards to how temperature and humidity combine to make it feel hotter.

Cold

For fall play, cold becomes a factor. Players should be allowed to dress in appropriate clothing. Field conditions will be affected by freezing rain, sleet and snow. The ground may become frozen and be unsafe for play.

HEAT

Heat is a problem when it prevents the body from cooling itself. The hotter the body gets, the more likely it is to increase fatigue levels, develop cramps, and increase the possibility of heat exhaustion and heat stroke. The hotter and more humid the weather, the faster these problems can develop. Temperatures as low as 65 degrees, with a relative humidity of 100%, can be serious.

A heat index chart should be consulted by every coach and referee.

Games need to be adjusted as the heat index rises:

- Mandatory water breaks
- Go to quarters
- Shorten the games

Provide training to coaches to teach the signs of heat exhaustion and heat stroke. EXTENSIVE HEAT INDEX INFORMATION IS POSTED ON USA OF INDIANA KIDSAFE WEBSITE.

Club administrators and tournament officials are responsible for monitoring the heat index (by weather radio, online or the Weather Channel) and keeping the participating teams and game officials informed of the heat index. Coaches are encouraged to also monitor the conditions.

Allowable Additional Clothing:

Layered beneath uniform (for example)

- long sleeves*
- long Pants*
- additional socks*

Gloves or mittens

Stocking caps without straps

Sweat pants or shirts

In the case of extremely cold weather, may be worn underneath the uniform, provided the entire team uses the same color sweats

Jackets

may be worn under the uniform so that referees get the player's number in the event of a card being issued.

Clothing NOT Allowed:

Hooded sweatshirts

*hoods do not turn when player turns head;
strings present possibility of being grabbed*

Ear muffs (headbands OK)

plastic or metal part crossing top of head presents potential hazard

Scarves

Players on sidelines should remain dressed (if in warm-ups) until they enter the game.

Players coming off should towel off (if sweaty) and get dressed quickly.

No one should sit or lie directly on ground. The heat is lost faster to ground than to air. Blankets and chairs are recommended.

Keep hydrated-avoid caffeine and pop.

Keep an eye on field conditions (wet, icy, etc.). Cold wet conditions can quickly change field from safe footing to slippery.

Keep an eye on the goalie—usually the player who gets coldest first, as not running or moving like a field player.

Referees and coaches should discuss weather and fields pre-game.

Safety and health of the players come first.