

West Linton Golf Club
Lightning Policy and Procedures

Lightning Policy

LIGHTNING IS A SEVERE HAZARD THAT MUST BE VIEWED SERIOUSLY

- a) The very nature of lightning is unpredictable and therefore dangerous. West Linton Golf Club consider the safety of its Members and Guests the top priority during inclement weather (lightning). Weather reports and local conditions are monitored during storm warnings. If it is decided that it is unsafe to continue to play golf as a storm approaches, the Professional Shop will sound a klaxon to call all golfers off the course and into the clubhouse.
- b) Outside Shop Hours, although the Club will take every precaution to ensure the safety of players during a thunderstorm, it is a player's own responsibility to discontinue play when in his/her opinion lightning is a threat. It is not always possible to monitor conditions on the entire course and players have a duty of care to themselves. They should therefore familiarise themselves with both the Club policy and the Rules of Golf.
- c) It is not the responsibility of staff to retrieve clubs, equipment, trolleys, or buggies from the course during a lightning storm where play has been suspended, as their safety may be jeopardised. Buggies should be left at the side of the fairway and the keys returned to the Pro Shop or Clubhouse.
- d) We insist that all members adhere to the lightning policy. West Linton Golf Club Limited accepts no liability for any injury to a golfer (member or visitor) who fails to comply with the requirements of this Policy and its Procedures and who continues to play when:
 - there is a risk of lightning.
 - play is suspended.
 - the course has been closed due to adverse weather conditions.

H. Sim
Secretary
7 September 2023

Procedures

1. If there is a risk of lightning play **MUST** be discontinued. West Linton Golf Club is not responsible for the safety of any golfer on the course, and it is therefore your responsibility to remove yourself from any situation which you deem dangerous.
2. However, if the klaxon sounds, (one long blast) it is mandatory that you leave the Course, and the following will apply:
 - a. Proceed immediately to the clubhouse or another building near your location (Greenkeepers Shed, On Course Toilet) – these are the safest places on the course.
 - b. Do not continue to play golf and do not seek shelter under trees. Trees do not protect you from lightning.
3. Players should stop play and seek shelter any time they believe lightning threatens them, even if the klaxon has not been sounded.

R&A Rules of Golf - Rule 5.7. Stopping Play; Resuming Play – See Annex 1.

Stopping Play

4. Rule 5.7 as stated in the R&A Rules of Golf will apply to all competitions and matches where there is a risk of lightning.
5. The rules of golf are straightforward when lightning is a risk. Rule 5.7 makes it quite clear that a player is entitled to discontinue play if he or she believes there is danger from lightning. Although severe weather in itself is not a good reason for discontinuing play, severe weather accompanied by lightning, or the very real risk of lightning, most certainly is. Common sense dictates that play in these circumstances must be discontinued in the interests of safety. Even if the klaxon is not sounded and the player honestly believes that there is a real risk of danger from lightning, then he or she is entitled to proceed under the provisions of Rule 5.7a and discontinue play.

Resumption of Play

6. Where play has been suspended due to lightning, play must be resumed where it was discontinued, even if resumption occurs on a subsequent day. (see Rule 5.7 R&A Rules of Golf.)
7. When the danger has passed, three short blasts of the klaxon will indicate that it is safe to return to the course. Play should not resume for at least 30 minutes after the final clap of thunder.

General

1. It is not the responsibility of staff to retrieve clubs, equipment, trolleys, or buggies from the course during a lightning storm where play has been suspended, as their safety may be jeopardised. Buggies should be left at the side of the fairway and the keys returned to the Pro Shop or Clubhouse. It remains the responsibility of each golfer to recover/retrieve any

equipment they have left on the course during a lightning related delay when it is safe so to do.

2. During the play of a formal competition there is an imminent risk of lightning, the following competition rules will apply:
 - a. the competition will be suspended.
 - b. each competitor will be required to stop play, to mark the position of their ball, lift the ball and then leave the course.
 - c. any player continuing play after play has been suspended will be disqualified from the competition.
 - d. the competition will be resumed only when it is safe so to do. If the match secretary does not consider it safe to resume play, the competition will be cancelled/abandoned.
3. During a lightning related delay, green fee-paying golfers who decide to abandon their round will not be eligible for a refund.
4. In the event that a visiting golfer's tee time cannot be rescheduled after a lightning related delay, a refund will be offered.

Procedures to be followed by employees.

5. When lightning is imminent, a signal will be sounded for the cessation of all work on the courses.
6. Employees are then required to make their way to the nearest place of safety.
7. When the risk from lightning has passed a further signal will be sounded. Work may then be resumed.
8. Failure to comply with the requirements of this Policy and Procedures by employees may invoke the Disciplinary Procedures.

Insurance:

9. Members are advised to take up their own insurance to cover for any Third-Party Risks.

Our tips.

- ❖ If there is a risk of lightning, do not go out. If you are already on the course, you must stop playing.
- ❖ Do NOT seek shelter under a tree. Lightning strikes the tallest objects.
- ❖ If you can, move to the clubhouse or another building near your location to find shelter indoors.
- ❖ Avoid contact with electrical devices and metal. This means do NOT seek shelter in the golf buggy, do not touch your golf clubs, umbrella, or mobile phone (switch it off) and stay away from metal fencing.

- ❖ If you are in an open area and cannot get to any building or car for shelter, then squat down with your hands on your knees and your head tucked between them. If you feel a tingling sensation in your hair or on your skin, drop to this position immediately. Try to touch as little of the ground as possible with your body. This makes you the smallest target possible for the lightning. Do **NOT** lie on the ground.
- ❖ Do not lean against concrete walls or stand by a stream.
- ❖ Avoid water and find a low-lying open place which is far from trees and metal objects. Do not rush back out onto the course straight away. Wait 30 minutes after the last lightning flash before resuming play, as over half of lightning deaths occur after the storm has passed.
- ❖ Please note that golf buggies do **NOT** give protection from lightning.

Did you know?

- ❖ The average length of a lightning bolt is 2-3 miles, yet the width is just 2-3cm.
- ❖ The temperature of lightning reaches 30,000 °C. To put this into context, that is five times hotter than the surface of the sun.

What to do if someone is hit by lightning.

- ❖ Call for help.
- ❖ Check for a pulse and if they are breathing. It is safe to touch them, as they will not be carrying an electrical charge.
- ❖ Apply CPR if necessary.
- ❖ Check for burns – there will usually be two burn spots from where the lightning entered and left the body.

R&A Rules of Golf - Rule 5.7. Stopping Play; Resuming Play

A link to the full R&A guidance can be found below.

[R&A Rule 5 Playing the Round](#)