

From: Brian Treanor, MYSL Referee Coordinator

To: MYSL Referees

Cc: MYSL Board of Directors
MYSL Town Referee Coordinators
MYSL Town Directors

Re: Thunderstorms and Lightning

It has come to my attention this evening that there may have been a situation recently where an MYSL match was being played while a thunderstorm with visible lightning was passing over the area of a field.

It cannot be understated that lightning is extremely dangerous and has the potential to cause serious injury or death if a person is struck by it. As referees in the MYSL it is your responsibility to ensure the safety of the players under your charge. ***Any time lightning is visible it is the responsibility of the referee to stop the match in progress and order the players from the field.*** Failure to do this opens you as the referee and the league up to serious liability.

The MYSL instructs its referees to adhere to the following policy regarding lightning:

- 1) If a referee hears thunder the referee should immediately begin to keep an eye on the sky for any sign of visible lightning.
- 2) At the first sign of lightning the referee is instructed to ***immediately*** stop the match and move the players from the field. Even if the lightning event only lasts for a short while *it is far better to err on the side of safety as opposed to allowing players to remain in a potentially dangerous situation.*
- 3) The referee should then wait 15-30 minutes (depending on how quickly the storm moves off) before attempting to restart the match. If after 30 minutes it appears as though the thunderstorm will not abate or that field conditions have deteriorated to the point where they are unplayable the referee may elect to abandon the match. If this happens the referee is required to file a report with the league.
- 4) If the match is resumed then it should resume with the proper restart appropriate for how the game was stopped.

This policy should be followed ***without exception*** by all referees in the MYSL. For additional information on this topic please read the article on this very topic by the Massachusetts State Director of Instruction, Ed Rae at:

http://www.massref.net/lightning_er.htm

Regards,

Brian D. Treanor
MYSL Referee Coordinator