

Santa Cruz Little League: Weather Safety Policy

I. Heat Index Protocol

Managers must use the **Heat Index** (the "Feels Like" or "RealFeel" temperature) rather than the ambient air temperature. Check **weather.com** or **accuweather.com** using the local zip code (e.g., 95060/95062) 2 hours before the event.

Heat Index (RealFeel)	Action / Precautions
Under 95°F	Normal Play. Ensure players are hydrated. Provide frequent water/shade breaks.
95°F – 99°F	Caution. Mandatory water breaks every 20 minutes in shade. Re-check Heat Index every 2 innings (games) or every water break (practice). Consider shortening duration or moving to off-field shaded drills.
100°F or Higher	Mandatory Suspension. All games and practices must stop. If in progress, move players to shade and contact parents for immediate pickup.

II. Air Quality Index (AQI) Guidelines

In accordance with California District and local health standards, SCLL monitors the **AQI** for wildfire smoke and pollutants. Ratings are based on **AirNow.gov** or **PurpleAir** (using US EPA conversion).

- **AQI 0–100 (Good/Moderate):** Play is permitted. Parents of "unusually sensitive" children (e.g., asthma) should use their discretion.
- **AQI 101–150 (Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups): Games proceed with caution.** Practices are optional and should be low-intensity. Players with respiratory conditions **must** be excused without penalty.
- **AQI 151+ (Unhealthy): Automatic Cancellation.** All outdoor league activities are suspended.

III. Lightning & Severe Storms (30/30 Rule)

Santa Cruz coastal weather can change rapidly. SCLL adheres to the **30/30 Rule**:

1. **Stop:** If the time between a lightning flash and its thunder is **30 seconds or less**, play must be suspended immediately.
 2. **Shelter:** All players and spectators must move to hard-topped vehicles or permanent buildings (dugouts are not considered safe shelter).
 3. **Resume:** Activities may only resume **30 minutes** after the last flash of lightning or clap of thunder is heard.
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IV. Rain and Field Conditions

The safety of the players and the long-term health of the fields are the primary concerns.

- **Field Closure:** If the City of Santa Cruz or the SCLL Board declares fields "Closed," all activities are canceled regardless of current sunshine.
 - **Manager Discretion:** If a field is muddy or has standing water ("puddling") on the pitcher's mound or base paths, the game/practice should be canceled to prevent injury and field damage.
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V. Rescheduling Policy

- **Spring Season:** Managers may propose to reschedule a canceled game, subject to field availability and Board approval.
- **Fall Ball:** Due to the compressed schedule, canceled games **will not** be rescheduled.

General Rule: In all cases, Managers should err on the side of caution. If you feel the conditions are unsafe for any reason, you have the authority to suspend activity for your team.

Written: 4/12/26 by Rebecca Barker, MD; SCLL Safety Officer