

Trentham Park Golf Club – Adverse Weather Policy

The safety of Members, Guests and Staff is the Club's top priority during adverse weather. Weather reports and local conditions are monitored whenever possible, and all reasonable action will be taken to protect all golfers, staff and the public.

In the event of adverse weather, a Club Official/professional/manager or green staff may at their discretion close the course until it is deemed the conditions have past and a notice put up on the approach to the first tee.

1. Fog Policy

Objective

To ensure safe playing conditions when visibility is reduced by fog, thereby minimising the risk of injury from golf balls in flight to all parties.

1.1 Competition Play

- Play must always start from the 1st tee unless agreed by a club official.
- If the 7th green is not fully visible from the 1st Black Tee Marker, play must be suspended or not started.
- Suspension will be signalled by one long blast of the klaxon. Play must stop immediately and await instructions. If you feel it is necessary to leave the course, you must mark your ball and make your way safely back to the clubhouse.
- Player Safety in Foggy Conditions:
In the interest of player and staff safety, play must not begin or continue if visibility is significantly reduced due to fog.
- If you **cannot clearly see where your ball would land or the group ahead of you**, play must be delayed.
- Play must **not commence until you can see a safe distance ahead**, such that any shot played will not endanger other players, greenkeeping staff, or property.
- The **Professional Shop / Starter / Club Official** has the authority to suspend, or delay play if visibility is deemed unsafe.
- Players must **use their own judgment** as well—if in doubt, wait until conditions improve.
- Resumption of play will be signalled by two long blasts of the klaxon. Competitors will be given time to return to their place on the course.

1.2 Non-Competition (General) Play

- Exactly the same applies as Competition Play.

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1.3 Suspension of Play

- A clear notice must always be placed on the 1st tee if play is not permitted due to fog.
- If visibility reduces to an unsafe level during play (for example, if you cannot clearly see golfers ahead in the landing area), golfers must stop immediately and report the condition to the Professional Shop or Manager. Golfers have an individual responsibility to cease play if conditions dictate.
- All golfers must not commence or continue to play when the decision to cease has been made.

1.4 Decision Makers

- An authorised Club Official must have information regarding the level of visibility at the 1st tee. The authorised Club Official's decision will be determined by the visual clarity the 7th green, from the 1st Black tee marker. The flag and outline of the 7th green must be fully visible from the 1st Black tee marker for the cessation or continuance of play. The authorised Club Official must decide on whether visibility is suitable for the commencement or cessation of play. The decision of the authorised Club Official is final regarding the suitability of weather conditions for playing golf.

Authorised Club Officials list

General Manager, Head Green Keeper or Deputy, Head Professional, Assistant Professional, Committee Member or Board Member.

The commencement or resumption of play

- a. In conditions of swirling fog visibility to the 7th Green must be consistent over a continuous minimum period of 15 minutes.
- b. An authorised Club Official will be the final arbiter of when conditions improve, and play can be restarted safely.

Background to the policy

Trentham Park Golf Club is situated in a valley and is prone in the winter months to dense Valley fog.

However, such weather conditions can also occur throughout all seasons of the year. We need to ensure that we do not expose people to undue risk at times that can be described as hazardous conditions. Hazardous conditions on a golf course in this context can be considered as when golfers and the public are in danger of being hit by a golf ball in flight in poor visibility weather conditions. The trajectory of a golf ball can be considered hazardous if it be towards the fairway, rough or undergrowth where golfers, the public and animals could be present. This is highlighted by the two following quotations: Extract from article by Michael Shaw, Secretary to the National Golf Clubs' Advisory Association. Golf is a game which is extremely difficult to play in fog. If a golfer hits a shot 'blind' into fog and hits a player or member of the public they could well be found negligent and held personally liable for the injuries afflicted. The complainant would be contributory negligent on the same basis. In addition the club could theoretically be sued, but only if it had knowingly allowed play in hazardous conditions, but once again the same rules regarding contributory negligence would be present. An equally serious problem exists if an employee of the club is injured in such circumstances. He could not be said to be guilty of contributory negligence and could claim against the club for negligently allowing play. Therefore, when visibility is limited in fog to the point at least where players cannot see where their driven golf ball is likely to end, they should not be permitted on the course."

2. Lightning Policy

Trentham Park Golf Club Board and Management Team consider the safety of its Members and Guests the top priority during inclement weather. 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 or safe location.

Although the Club will take every precaution to ensure the safety of players during a lightning or thunderstorm.

It is a player's own responsibility to discontinue play when in his/her opinion lightning is in the vicinity.

If there is a risk of lightning play MUST be discontinued. Trentham Park 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.

If you see lightning or hear the klaxon the following will apply:

Proceed immediately to the clubhouse.

Do not continue to play golf and do not seek shelter under trees. Trees do not protect you from lightning.

- If there is a lightning risk, play will be suspended and players must leave the course.
- Where play is automatically suspended on the sound of the klaxon, a player may not override the Policy decision to evacuate the course.
- Players should stop play and seek shelter any time they believe lightning threatens them, even if the klaxon has not been sounded.

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 take every precaution in such conditions. Trentham Park Golf Club require that all golfers adhere to the lightning policy and make themselves aware of our Adverse Weather Policy.

Failure to do so is at your own risk and Trentham Park Golf Club accepts no liability for any golfer who fails to co-operate with this policy. It is not the responsibility of staff to retrieve clubs, equipment or trolleys from the course during a lightning storm where play has been suspended, as their safety may be jeopardised.

Please note that golf buggies do NOT give protection from lightning.

In case of emergency If someone is hit by lightning, call emergency services – they will need help as soon as possible. If you know first aid, apply it – you will not receive an electric shock. A lightning strike is not usually instantly fatal, victims' hearts and/or breathing may stop however, so quick application of CPR will likely save their life. **LIGHTNING IS A SEVERE HAZARD THAT MUST BE VIEWED SERIOUSLY.**

There is a defibrillator available adjacent the professional shop for use by golfers & members of the public, in addition there is a second one in the foyer for golfers. You need to ring the emergency services to obtain the code to gain access.

General Principles

Playing golf in lightning conditions is extremely dangerous.

- If lightning is seen or thunder is heard, play must cease immediately.
- Golfers must not seek shelter under trees, umbrellas or in golf buggies, as these do not provide protection.
- The safest locations is the Clubhouse The Club will clearly identify and signpost any such shelters on the course.

Signals

- One long blast of the klaxon – Suspension of play. All golfers must mark their ball and leave the course immediately.
- Two short blasts – Safe to resume play.
- Three long blasts – Play abandoned. All golfers must return to the Clubhouse.

Competitions, Organised Play and General Play

In competitions, the decision to suspend or abandon play rests with the Competition Committee / Tournament Organiser and/or the Professional Shop, depending on who is present and most knowledgeable about the course and conditions.

Under Rule 5.7 of the Rules of Golf, players may stop play if they believe there is a danger from lightning, even if no official signal has been given.

When resuming, play must restart from the point where it was stopped.

Individual Responsibility

- Players always have a responsibility for their own safety.
- Outside staffed hours, safety decisions rest with the individual golfer.
- Players should stop play and seek shelter if they believe lightning threatens them, even if the klaxon has not sounded.
- The Club cannot guarantee to monitor conditions across the whole course at all times.

Refunds and Tee Times

- If play is suspended due to lightning, golfers should wait in a safe place e.g. Clubhouse until conditions improve and the signal given that it is safe to resume.
- If visiting golfers choose to abandon their round, refunds will not normally apply — however, player safety must always take precedence over financial considerations.
- Reasonable endeavours will be made to reschedule missed tee times where possible.

Emergencies

- If someone is struck by lightning, call emergency services immediately (999).
- Administer CPR if necessary – victims do not carry an electric charge and can be safely assisted.

Duty of Care

All golfers have a responsibility to protect themselves.

Failure to follow this policy is at the individual's own risk. Trentham Park Golf Club accepts no liability for any injury or loss arising from non-compliance.

Staff are not expected to retrieve equipment from the course during lightning.

 Lightning is a severe hazard and must always be taken seriously.

3. Juniors

General Principles

- The safety and welfare of juniors is of paramount importance.
- Juniors may be less experienced at recognising and responding to adverse weather risks, so extra supervision is required.

Responsibilities

- When playing in organised junior events or coaching sessions, the supervising adult (Junior Organiser, PGA Professional or designated responsible adult) will have an extra option in addition to our Adverse Weather Policy to decide if play should commence, continue or be suspended.
- In open competitions involving juniors, the Competition Committee and/or Professional Shop will take responsibility for safety decisions.
- Parents and guardians remain responsible for ensuring their child is appropriately dressed and equipped for the weather (e.g. warm/waterproof clothing, hat, gloves, drinks).

Adverse Weather Response

- Juniors wherever possible should be escorted safely to the clubhouse if play is suspended due to fog, lightning or other dangerous conditions.
- Supervising adults must account for all juniors before resumption of play.

4. High Winds

General Principles

- High winds can cause falling branches, debris, and unstable ground conditions which pose a risk to golfers and staff.

Play Restrictions

- If winds are strong enough to move golf balls on the green or to blow over course furniture (signage, bins, flags etc.), the course will be closed until conditions improve.
- Play will also be suspended if there is visible damage to trees or structures that could create a hazard.
- Suspension will be signaled using the klaxon system (as per the Lightning Policy).