



SUMMIT UNITED FC

HAZARDOUS WEATHER POLICY

Kamas Valley weather can turn fast – thunderstorms, extreme heat, and hard winter cold all show up during our season. This policy is grounded in U.S. Soccer's Recognize to Recover environmental guidelines, with additional standards drawn from the National Athletic Trainers' Association (NATA) and commonly found best practices among youth soccer clubs.

It gives coaches and club leadership clear, actionable standards for when to modify, delay, or cancel training and games.

Coaches and club leadership share responsibility for these decisions. Field-level coaches can always make a more conservative call than this policy requires – when in doubt, the safer decision wins.

Lightning & Severe Weather

Lightning is one of the leading causes of sudden death in sport, and it's the one hazard we treat with zero tolerance for waiting it out.

Recognize

- No place outside is safe once a thunderstorm is in the area. Suspend all activity immediately, even before lightning or thunder is observed.

All coaches are required to download the [My Lightning Tracker app](#) (also available on Google Play) and use it to check real-time lightning activity before every outdoor training and game. Outdoor activity should not be held if there is any lightning strike detected within 6-8 miles of the field.

- Backup method: If the app is unavailable (dead phone, no signal, technical issue), use the flash-to-bang method as a fallback. Count the seconds between seeing lightning and hearing thunder – every 5 seconds equals about 1 mile of distance. At a count of 30 seconds (about 6 miles) or less, get to safety immediately.
- Monitor the National Weather Service or local alerts for severe weather watches and warnings in the area.
- Warning signs of an imminent strike: hair standing on end, tingling skin, or crackling noises. If this happens, get as low as possible immediately.

The 30-30 Rule

- Once lightning or thunder is observed, everyone leaves the field for safe shelter.
- Safe shelter is a fully enclosed building, or a fully enclosed vehicle with a hard metal roof. Open-sided shelters, dugouts, and pop-up canopies are not safe.
- Wait at least 30 minutes after the last sound of thunder or flash of lightning before resuming play. The 30-minute clock restarts every time thunder or lightning is observed again.

If a Player is Struck by Lightning

EMERGENCY RESPONSE:

- Call 911 immediately.
 - The area must be confirmed safe before anyone approaches to help.
 - It's safe to touch someone struck by lightning – they do not carry a charge.
 - Begin CPR immediately if the person is unconscious, not breathing, or has no pulse. Use an AED if available.
 - A player struck by lightning never returns to play that day, and needs full medical clearance before returning to any future activity.
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Extreme Heat

Recognize

Heat exhaustion and heat stroke can escalate quickly. Watch for:

- Weakness, fatigue, headache, nausea, or dizziness (early signs)
- Confusion, irritability, slurred speech, or loss of balance (advanced signs)
- Hot, flushed skin or, conversely, complaints of chills while skin is warm to the touch
- Body temperature above 104°F is a medical emergency

Standards for Modifying or Cancelling Training

The following practical standards* apply when holding a Club game, training, or event:

- Heat index or air temperature 90-104°F: Add hydration breaks (every 20-30 minutes), reduce training intensity, and consider moving practice earlier or later in the day.
- Heat index or air temperature 105°F or higher: Practices and games should be postponed or cancelled.
- Any active NWS Heat Advisory or Excessive Heat Warning: Club leadership will reassess scheduled outdoor activity for that day, regardless of the specific temperature reading.

**adapted from NATA guidance and comparable youth sports policies.*

Water must be available and unlimited at every practice and game, year-round – not just on hot days.

If a Player Shows Signs of Heat Illness

RESPONSE:

- Remove the player from activity and the heat source immediately.
 - Move to shade or a cool location; cool with wet towels, fans, or misting water.
 - Provide fluids and electrolytes if the player is alert and able to drink.
 - If symptoms include confusion, loss of consciousness, or a suspected body temperature above 104°F, this is exertional heat stroke – call 911 immediately and begin cooling with ice-water immersion or cold wet towels rotated over the body while waiting for help.
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Air Quality

A strong Air Quality Index (AQI) training policy aligns with EPA and athletic association standards. It mandates tracking local air quality via AirNow before all sessions, restricting outdoor exertion at an AQI over 100 for sensitive groups, modifying intensity at 151, and moving or canceling events at 201 and above. [[1](#), [2](#), [3](#), [4](#), [5](#)]

Monitoring and Responsibilities

Designate authority: Assign a coach, athletic trainer, or safety coordinator to check local AQI readings and forecasts 1-2 hours before outdoor training.

Identify vulnerable participants: Keep a confidential list of athletes or staff with asthma, heart/lung conditions, or allergies.

Use reliable data: Rely on official government tracking tools like AirNow Fire and Smoke Map rather than visual estimates.

Tiered Action Thresholds

AQI 0-50 (Green): Normal operations; no restrictions.

AQI 51-100 (Yellow): Acceptable air quality. Unusually sensitive individuals should monitor for personal symptoms.

AQI 101-150 (Orange / Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups):

Sensitive participants (those with asthma or respiratory issues) must reduce prolonged/heavy exertion or move indoors.

AQI 151-200 (Red / Unhealthy):

Move all high-intensity or long training sessions indoors.

Sensitive individuals must avoid all outdoor physical activity. Shorten remaining outdoor activities and minimize heavy breathing rates.

AQI 201-300 (Purple / Very Unhealthy):

Strongly consider rescheduling, postponing, or canceling outdoor training.
Relocate activities to an indoor space with filtered air (HEPA/AC recirculation).

AQI 301+ (Maroon / Hazardous):

Cancel all outdoor training and competitions immediately. Keep any essential indoor activity at a very low intensity.

Extreme Cold

Recognize

- Hypothermia: intense cold, shivering, then confusion, sleepiness, or slurred speech as it worsens
- Frostbite: numbness, tingling, or stinging, most often in fingers, toes, ears, nose, or cheeks; skin may look pale, gray, or waxy

Standards for Modifying or Cancelling Training

These standards are based on wind chill temperature (WCT), which accounts for wind speed as well as air temperature, adapted from NATA guidance and comparable club policies:

- Wind chill 20-32°F: Normal activity, but ensure players are dressed in layers with extremities (hands, ears, head) covered.
- Wind chill below 20°F: All outdoor training is cancelled for all age groups.
- Any active NWS Wind Chill Advisory or Warning: Outdoor training will be limited to a maximum of 60 minutes, or cancelled at club leadership's discretion.
- Regardless of temperature, if the field is frozen, icy, or otherwise unsafe underfoot, practice will not proceed.

Coaches should identify a warm indoor location near every field before cold-weather practices begin, in case a player needs to warm up during a session.

If a Player Shows Signs of Cold-Related Illness

RESPONSE:

- Get the player to a warm location immediately.
- Remove any wet or damp clothing and replace with dry layers.
- For suspected hypothermia: warm the body's core first (not the arms and legs), provide warm (non-alcoholic) fluids if alert, and never use a hot shower or bath.
- For suspected frostbite: gradually rewarm with warm (not hot) water. Never rub or massage the area, and never use direct heat sources like heating pads or a stove.
- If symptoms are severe or persist, call 911 or seek emergency care immediately.

How Cancellations Are Communicated

When weather requires a delay or cancellation, club leadership and coaches will communicate the decision through the team app and/or direct messaging as soon as the call is made. Coaches on-site always have the authority to suspend activity immediately for any of the conditions above, without waiting for club sign-off – player safety comes first, every time.

Learn More

For full detail on heat, cold, lightning, air quality, and sun safety guidance, visit U.S. Soccer's [Recognize to Recover: Environmental Conditions](#) page directly.