

YARRAWONGA MULWALA GOLF CLUB RESORT

Policy Name: **Extreme Weather Policy**

Statement: Yarrowonga Mulwala Golf Club Resort (YMGCR) is committed to having in place an “Extreme Weather Policy” that reflects a duty of care for its members and guests. It has been prepared with the aim of maximising member playing opportunities, but also clearly identifying the required procedures when weather events reach levels in which a player’s safety and damage to the facilities are at risk.

Definition: Extreme Weather includes: extreme heat, thunder and lightning, flooding, fog and strong winds which will render the facilities unplayable due to an extreme weather event or other circumstances.

Policy: This policy provides a framework and guidelines to minimise the risk of harm occurring due to extreme weather at YMGCR.

The Policy will apply to all persons participating in the various sporting activities available across the resort, including, but not limited to Golf, Bowls, Croquet and Tennis.

YMGCR acknowledges a duty of care to its members and will apply a reasonable approach to certain mandatory actions during days of extreme weather. YMGCR is concerned for the health, safety, welfare and wellbeing of all its members and guests as well as our staff who may also be placed at risk should players not adhere.

Extreme weather conditions are not always forecast and can materialise with little warning. Where possible YMGCR will initiate the action in this policy to make players aware of the dangers of extreme weather.

Action will typically be an initial warning to all players of the threat of an extreme weather event and if the situation deteriorates competitions maybe suspended or cancelled and the facilities closed.

Typically, the club Captain will liaise with YMGCR Pro Shop staff and Administrators to initiate display and publication of extreme weather warnings and if necessary, the immediate suspension of play or if absolutely necessary, the closure of the facilities.

However, players must take responsibility for their own safety when threatened by extreme weather. Any player in a group can choose to stop play and seek shelter if they believe an extreme situation exists or is imminent in accordance with rule **5.7a – When Players May or Must Stop Play.**

https://www.randa.org/rog/the-rules-of-golf/rule-5#5_7a

Glossary: Throughout this document the following terms and titles are used:

Club Captain: refers to both the Club Captain and Vice-Captain (Golf).

Competition Coordinator: refers to the person responsible for coordinating any Bowls or Croquet competition present at the time of the relevant Extreme Weather event.

Pro Shop Staff: refers to the Head Golf Professional or in his or her absence the most senior member of Pro Shop staff who is present at the time of the relevant Extreme Weather event.

Administrator: refers to the C.E.O of YMGCR or the most senior management representative with whom the responsibility rests for the good management of the club at the time of the relevant Extreme Weather event.

Honour Board Event: refers to Monthly Medal, 'Pot Round or Pewter', Club Championships etc for golf and similar significant events for the other sports, that normally attract strong fields

The **Golf Committee (for Golf) and Administrator (for other sports)** will regularly monitor adherence to this policy.

Procedure:

Emergency Warning Siren

In 2022 YMGCRC invested in its own Lightning Warning software to compliment the current arrangements for weather monitoring. A large computer monitor screen dedicated entirely to the BoM rain radar is situated in the Pro Shop for all players to utilise when contemplating whether to play or otherwise. Pro Shop staff monitor NSW and Victorian emergency phone Apps to ensure they are forewarned of an oncoming risk.

In the event of a lightning storm the aforementioned Lightning Warning software will automatically sound the warning siren to, where possible, forewarn users of the facilities of impending lightning.

The warning siren operated by Lightning Warning software can also be manually activated in the event of a non-lightning weather event such as Strong Wind or Fog.

In all cases traditional means of warning players of the need to stop play will be used. Pro Shop staff and Administrators will go onto the courses / rinks / courts and advise players of the situation, whether that be a warning of an approaching threat or the need to cease play immediately.

The following are event specific applications of this Policy in regard to specific weather events.

Lightning Storm

Lightning presents an extreme risk to personal safety. The risk of lightning will be determined using one of the following means:

- a) Seeing lightning or on hearing thunder and applying a recognised flash to thunder reckoner eg: If thunder is heard, the distance to lightning activity can be estimated at 10 kms if the time between a lightning flash and thunder is approximately 30 seconds or less,
- b) The YMGCRC Lightning Warning system which automatically activates and sounds the siren when there is a lightning ground strike within 8 kms of the YMGCRC Pro Shop. As a loss of power occasionally accompanies storm activity the modern Lightning Warning software may not activate. The decision to suspend play will not rely solely on the sounding of the Lightning Warning siren.

If a Lightning event is detected and expected to impact the facilities of YMGCRC by either a) or b) above all **competition play will be suspended**. To ensure no unnecessary risks are taken by players and in fairness to all players entered in the competition of the day, **ALL players MUST stop play** and seek shelter. Players will be notified of the need to suspend play as follows:

The club's Warning siren will activate as follows.

Immediate Stop: One 30-second activation of the '**Initial Stop Play**' siren
Resume Play: Two 10-second activations of the '**All Clear**' siren

Pro Shop staff will also travel the golf courses, where possible, prior to the approach of the extreme weather event and advise players of the requirement to immediately suspend play. Likewise, Administrators will take similar action to alert those utilising Bowls, Croquet and Tennis facilities.

If at the expiry of one hour after the initial warning is sounded by the Warning Siren the lightning event continues, or the 'All Clear' siren has not sounded, the competition of the day will be cancelled.

For golf, in the event that competition is suspended due to lightning and play does not resume, only scores submitted for rounds completed before the first activation of the warning siren will be considered. A decision to award prizes will be based on the percentage of total scores submitted at the discretion of the club Captain and Pro Shop staff.

In an endeavour to ensure the safety of all players and adherence to this policy, **any score from a player who continues to play after a warning siren, in contravention of this policy, will not be accepted regardless of whether play resumes.** Such a score will be deemed outside the spirit of the game and that score disqualified.

Those coordinating competitions in the other sports will be responsible for determining the outcome of any suspended or cancelled play.

Strong Wind

If the Captain, Pro Shop Staff or Administrators considers that, due to Strong Wind, the facilities are not in a playable condition or that there are circumstances that render the proper playing of the game impossible, they may order a temporary suspension of play or cancel all play on that day.

Members, Guests, Volunteers and Workers are advised and reminded of the dangers of limbs falling from trees on days of extreme winds (50 kph or more). Members, Guests, Volunteers and Workers are advised to be aware of the forecast of strong winds and give consideration to their own personal safety while using the facilities.

If the wind speed and gusts recorded at the BoM Yarrowonga weather station exceeds 50 kph, all **competition play will be suspended.** To ensure no unnecessary risks are taken by players and in fairness to all players entered in the competition of the day, **ALL players MUST stop play** and seek shelter. Players will be notified of the need to suspend play as follows:

The club's Warning Siren will activate as follows.

Immediate Stop: One 30-second activation of the siren

Resume Play: Two 10-second activations of the siren

Pro Shop staff will also travel the courses and advise players of the requirement to immediately suspend play until the wind speeds have dropped below 50 kph. Likewise, Administrators will take similar action to alert those utilising Bowls, Croquet and Tennis facilities.

The wind speed will be monitored by the Club Captain, Pro Shop staff and Administrators using available BoM live data. Should a situation arise where it is considered such strong winds will likely persist and continue to endanger those using the facilities, the facilities will be closed.

Fog

For golf, where fog is present and visibility is reduced so that the course is not visible from the Pro Shop, play may be suspended at the discretion of the Captain, Pro-Shop Staff or Administrator.

The Warning Siren will be used to suspend play. Heavy fog may render the siren inaudible in some extreme areas of the course depending on density. Pro Shop staff will travel the courses and advise players of the requirement to suspend play until the fog has lifted and visibility improved to a safe level.

Once cessation of play has been signalled, Pro Shop staff must ensure any golfers arriving at the course are prevented from hitting off until play is resumed and any players on the course have ceased playing.

Once the fog has lifted and visibility has returned, the Captain, Pro-Shop Staff or Administrator may direct play be resumed.

For other sports, fog, and a decision to play Bowls, Croquet and Tennis through a fog event will be a matter for the relevant event coordinator.

Extreme Heat

In the event that at 4.30pm, the day before a competition, the Bureau of Meteorology's (BoM) forecast for Yarrowonga is 38° C or higher, if the competition of the day was to be an Honour Board Event, that event will be rescheduled and substituted with a Stableford event or similar event for Bowls and Croquet.

The temperature will be monitored and at the moment the Bureau of Meteorology's (BoM) observed temperature for Yarrowonga reaches 38°C the Warning Siren will be activated and all remaining competition for the day will be cancelled. Pro Shop, and where necessary Administration staff will also go out and alert competitors in all sports of the need to cease competition.

For golfers who remain on the course at the sound of the siren their card will be marked NSA.

For Bowls and Croquet events, earlier start times will be employed to endeavor to complete all events before the extreme heat eventuates. Once the temperature reaches 38°C all competition must cease and the results determined from the scores available.

The facilities will remain open for "members, guests and visitors for social play", however any decision to play will be solely the responsibility of the individual. Those who do play socially will be advised that due to Staff WH&S protocols our Drink Cart will not operate once the temperature reaches the 38°C threshold.

All players who play on days of extreme heat are advised to apply sunscreen, wear hats, consider using a motorised golf cart, carry an umbrella and other protective clothing and continually re-hydrate (with water) during play.

The cancellation of the competition once the temperature reaches the extreme heat threshold represents YMGCRC's advice that members should take appropriate and due care for their health and welfare. Members will know before arriving at YMGCRC of the situation that they can expect.

Heat Stress - the policy notes that stresses occur when air temperatures exceed 35° C and particularly when body temperatures exceed 37.6° C.

Heat illnesses arising from excessive heat while playing sports include:

- Heat rash
- Heat cramps
- Heat exhaustion and heat stroke
- Fainting and hyperventilation

Resumption Commitment

Any decision to close the facilities or suspend play will not be made without due diligence. It will always be the aim of YMGCRC to return players to the facilities, to resume competition, as soon as is safe and practical to do so. If, however it appears unlikely that the extreme weather preventing play will persist and continue to pose an unacceptable risk to players, the YMGCRC Captain, Pro Shop staff or Administrators may deem it unsafe to resume and cancel play for the remainder of the day.

Accommodated Guests

All Accommodated Guests who are playing a sport at YMGCRC during an extreme weather event will be approached and advised of the requirement to leave the course or rink for their own safety. Pro Shop staff or Administrators will approach and warn the players of the nature of the extreme weather event and the requirement that they suspend or complete play. Should such a recommendation be met with protest or a refusal to leave the facility the players will be warned that they play on at their own risk.

In the event that Accommodated Guests are required to suspend play, a voucher will be given for the player or players to return at a safe time on another day.

Improved Notification / Education

In an endeavour to prevent players being cut short during a game due to Extreme Weather, YMGCRC will introduce Member / Player notification. Initiatives to be introduced include:

- On days where Extreme Weather is a possibility, Pro Shop Staff will proactively notify players arriving to register, of the introduction of this amended Policy and the potential need to compulsorily suspend play.
- A high visibility advertising Sandwich Board will be prominently displayed near the Pro Shop / Practice Green with clear instructions on what to do in the event of play being suspended.
- The Golf Captain will, where possible use the Mi-Club and available Social Media platforms to notify members in advance of the impending extreme weather events.

Sunscreen Stations

YMGCRC will distribute throughout its facilities, Sun Screen re-application stations that have been provided by the Cancer Council of Australia. In accordance with the complimentary supply of sunscreen for these stations the YMGCRC will display the 'SunSmart' promotional material where required.

Relevant Legislation: Nil

Related Documents: **Golf Australia – Extreme Weather Guidelines (Heat)**

<https://www.golf.org.au/policiesandbylaws/>

Bowls NSW – Extreme Weather Policy (all weather conditions)

https://bowlsnsw.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/BNSW_ExtremeWeatherGuidelines_2020.pdf

Croquet Australia – Extreme Weather Policy (all weather conditions)

<https://croquet-australia.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Adverse-Playing-Conditions-Policy.pdf>

Related Policies: Nil

Original Policy - Promulgated Date: 28 November 2022		
Amendments Made:		
No:	Date	Summary of Amendment:
1.	08 Jan 2024	Clarification of: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Requirement to suspend competition for ALL players when the Emergency Siren is sounded.• Clarification of Heat Policies for all sports available at YMGCRC and determination of the heat, in degrees celsius at which competitions will be postponed
2.	31 Jan 2024	Remove restriction on Social Players being able to play when Heat Rule is enforced.
3.	26 Feb 2024	Revised Extreme Heat clause. Allows all sports to be played until 38°C is reached.
4.		