



MEMORANDUM

August 24, 2010

To: Rio Vista FC Members

Re: Lightning Safety

Welcome to our new members and coaches, and welcome back to our returning members and coaches.

I would like to take this opportunity to encourage all of our membership to become familiar with the club policy regarding lightning safety. The policy can be found in our membership manual on pages 16 - 17.

It is imperative that all of our coaches understand the importance of adhering to this policy. There is absolutely no purpose, game, tournament, or other competition that is important enough to put any of our players, parents, or coaches at risk when it comes to lightning. New Mexico ranks near the top of list for annual lightning strikes.

If you practice at ADO, when the siren goes off at the golf course, practice / scrimmages must be stopped and the players, parents and coaches must clear the field. If you are practicing at a venue away from ADO, and there is no lightning system near enough for the team to benefit from the early warning, there must be a designated party monitoring the lightning and storm cell movement. When there is a "flash to bang" count of 30 seconds or less, the field must be cleared. A "flash to bang" count of 30 sec. indicates that the lightning has struck within 6 miles of your location. Lightning has been documented as striking up to 10 miles from a storm cell.

It is the responsibility of all Board members, Senior Staff, and Age Group directors, if present at a venue, to ensure the fields are cleared should any of the above listed conditions exist. Should no member of the RVFC Board or Staff be present at the practice venue, it is the expectation of the club that the coach make a decision regarding initiation /continuation the team activity in accordance with the lightning policy. Failure to clear the field when directed could result in disciplinary action being levied against the coach and or team. Additionally, a coach may not retaliate against a player or parent through limitation of playing time or other methods for said player, should that player feel uncomfortable practicing in conditions they feel are unsafe.

When a field has been cleared, the players are to be in safe shelter - not milling about outside between cars, or otherwise engaging in activities where a lightning strike could do them harm. At ADO, seeking shelter under the 2 **METAL** awnings next to the 25 foot **METAL** flagpole (**read 25 ft LIGHTNING ROD**) is not to be considered safe shelter.

For our younger teams, if there is threatening weather in the area, please make arrangements to have enough parents at the practice site so all the players can get into a car until the weather passes and practice resumes, or practice is cancelled and the parents can come get the players. For older teams, the players should go to their cars and remain there until the coach deems conditions safe for continuing or cancels practice.

The Board of Directors takes this issue very seriously. We wish to be known for our accomplishments on the field and within the community, not for suffering a tragedy that could have been avoided by following the policies already in place.

Good luck with your seasons this fall.

Best Regards,

Greg "Woody" Woodhouse
President - RVFC