Weather Policy & Guidelines

Policy Owner:	OC Operations	**Version:**	3.0
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Related Policies:	Risk Management Policy		

1) Purpose

a) Ontario Cycling (OC) considers the health and safety of all cyclists an absolute priority. We must always be mindful that we do not potentially cause harm to a venue site when cycling during bad weather conditions (e.g., heavy rain on BMX tracks, parks, or trails) or move forward with an event in weather conditions which may increase the risk to participant safety.

b) The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines to assist Commissaires, event organizers, clubs, and teams in making informed decisions when encountering different types of weather to minimize participant risk. Decisions may range from modifications to the time schedule and route, alteration of the start time, finish venue, course adjustments, neutralization, or cancellation of a stage or the whole event.

2) Scope

a) This policy applies to all OC sanctioned cycling events, club, and team activities. Extreme weather conditions may include, but are not limited to, lightning, thunder, strong winds, air pollution (AQ), extreme temperatures, poor visibility, freezing rain, hail, snow, etc.

b) OC strongly recommends that local weather forecasts be monitored closely by the event organizer, club, team activity organizer, and/or Commissaires. Alerts should be activated through a weather app (WeatherCAN is recommended) via cell phone for the latest updates on local weather.

3) Possible Weather Conditions

a) Lightning / Thunder
b) Possible Tornado / Funnel Clouds
c) Air Pollution (AQ)
d) Extreme Heat and/or Humidity
e) Extreme Cold
f) Strong Winds (Sustained) and Wind Gusts
g) Poor Visibility
h) Other Weather Conditions (Fog, mist, rain, haze, freezing rain/sleet, hail, and snow)

4) Actions

a) Depending on the severity of weather conditions that may occur, the following actions may be taken:
   i. No action
   ii. Modification of the schedule
   iii. Time delay in the schedule
   iv. Modification of the start venue
   v. Modification of the start time
   vi. Modification of the finish venue
   vii. Modification of finish time
   viii. Use of an alternative course / route
   ix. Neutralization of a section of the stage / race
   x. Cancellation of the stage / race

5) Cancellation or Event Postponement

a) At any point where a decision is to be made regarding stopping, delaying, postponing, shortening, or cancelling a race or cycling recreational event due to the severity of weather conditions, the decision will be made by the Event PCP in consultation with their partners and the Event Organizer. If this is a cycling recreational event, the decision would be made by the Event Organizer.

b) If the decision is to start an event, either on time or through postponement, the event may still be cancelled at any time if conditions become dangerous.

6) Lightning / Thunder Policy

a) Local weather should be monitored by the event organizer / club / team representative. Events will not be held during conditions of thunder and lightning, excessively high winds, or in the unlikely event of a possible tornado.

b) OC highly recommends that each event have a daily weather update posted in strategic positions throughout the registration and entrance area. Where this is not possible (i.e., club/team activity), there should be a directive to all members to check the website, socials, and/or ride app for updated information.

c) Organizers, participants, and Commissaires will be informed of this policy, which is to be posted in multiple areas.

d) In the event of thunder or lightning, the course will be evacuated and shelter found. Thirty (30) minutes must pass from the last clap of thunder or flash of lightning before riders may resume their event/activity. Each new occurrence begins a new 30-minute cycle. No outdoor activities will be initiated when thunder and/or lightning is present.

e) If thunder and lightning occur once activities have started, utilize the 'flash-to-bang' method for determining the distance of lightning: count the number of seconds between seeing the lightning flash and hearing the clap of thunder. If the time is 30 seconds or less, stop the event and seek shelter immediately. The approximate rule is seconds ÷ 3 = distance in km. For example, 30 seconds ÷ 3 = 10 km. Lightning within 10 km poses a direct risk to participants.

f) A safe shelter is defined as a sturdy building that has metal plumbing or wiring to electrically ground the structure. A shed or shack is not a safe shelter.

g) Stay away from tall or individual trees, lone objects (flagpoles), metal objects, standing pools of water, and open fields. Maintain 15–20 feet from others.

h) Allow 30 minutes to pass after the last sound of thunder or sight of lightning before resuming any outdoor activities, INCLUDING WALKING OUTSIDE OF YOUR SHELTER.

i) The Lead Commissaire or Ride Leader for club/team activities, in consultation with their partners, will be responsible for making decisions regarding stoppage, delay, or evacuation due to thunder, lightning, or other extreme weather patterns.

7) Air Quality Policy

a) Air quality in Ontario is generally good, but due to various reasons that may not be the case on any given event day. As a coach, event organizer, Commissaire, club/team administrator, or Ride Leader, it is important to monitor local air quality to ensure participants are protected from exposure to poor air quality.

b) The Air Quality Health Index (AQHI) communicates the following:

i. It measures air quality in relation to health on a scale from 1 to 10. The higher the number, the greater the health risk. When pollution is very high, it will be reported as 10+.

ii. A category that describes the level of health risk (Low, Moderate, High, or Very High Health Risk).

iii. Health messages customized for the general population and 'at-risk' populations.

iv. Current hourly AQHI readings and maximum forecast values for today, tonight, and tomorrow.

c) How is the AQHI calculated?

i. The AQHI is calculated based on relative risks of a combination of common air pollutants known to harm human health:

1. Ozone (O3) at ground level

2. Particulate Matter (PM2.5/PM10)
3. Nitrogen Dioxide (NO2)

ii. The AQHI presents the relative health risk for short-term exposure on a scale of 1 to 10+. There are four health categories:

iii. If the AQHI value is low (1 to 3): plan outdoor activities.

iv. If the AQHI value is moderate (4 to 6): reduce the intensity of the outdoor activity (or reschedule).

v. If the AQHI value is high (over 7): move the session indoors, cancel, or reschedule.

vi. The following procedures are to be followed depending on the Air Quality Index:

Air Quality Category	Message	Action for Events
Good Visibility: 15 km and Up AQHI 1–3	Ideal air quality for outdoor activities	Ideal conditions for an event
Moderate / Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups Visibility: 5–14 km AQHI 4–6	Be aware of health effects of smoke and related symptoms	Be aware of health effects of smoke and related symptoms
Unhealthy Visibility: 2.5–4 km AQHI 7	Reduce or re-schedule strenuous activities, especially if you experience symptoms	Consider reduction of length of events and/or cancellation of junior and younger events. Consider delaying start up to 2 hours. Cancel event based on forecast. Provide warning to competitors with respiratory issues.
Unhealthy Visibility: 2.5–4 km AQHI 8	Re-schedule strenuous activities	Cancel event. Cancel Junior Events.
Very Unhealthy Visibility: 1.5–2 km AQHI 9–10	Avoid prolonged strenuous activities and stay indoors if possible	Cancel all events and training
HAZARDOUS Visibility: < 1.0 km AQHI 10+	Avoid all strenuous activities and stay indoors	Cancel all events and training

8) Extreme Heat Policy

a) Once the temperature reaches 40°C, all activities must be cancelled.

b) Once the temperature reaches between 35°C–39°C, the cancellation of races should be seriously considered.

c) With high heat temperatures across Ontario, all clubs must take precautions to ensure member safety. It is the responsibility of the club executive, coaches, and ride leaders to monitor local temperatures and decide which precautions must be taken, including the cancelling of any race or ride.

d) Extreme Heat Activity Chart:

Humidex Value	Discomfort at Rest	Risk of Overheating During Exercise	Activity Modification
Below 24°C	None	Low	N/A

25°C – 29°C	None	Low to Moderate	Consider shorter rides, especially for young riders
30°C – 34°C	Some	Moderate – Athletes should be monitored	Shorter rides, longer breaks between motos, water breaks
35°C – 39°C	High	High – Athletes should be monitored closely	Consider cancelling racing. Practices or easy rides only. Ensure shaded areas and ample water.
40°C +	EXTREME	EXTREME	Activity Cancelled

e) Preventative Measures:
- i. Where possible, activities should be scheduled for cooler times of the day.
- ii. Ensure that everyone participating has enough water and hydration. Recognize that even well-hydrated athletes can be affected by heat illness. Plan for plenty of breaks and keep rides shorter.
- iii. Other factors to consider when determining risk include, but are not limited to:
  1. Not being acclimatized / Fitness Level
  2. Hypo/Hyper hydration
  3. Use of medications or supplements
  4. Pre-existing medical conditions
- iv. Early warning signs include but are not limited to:
  1. Flushed face, Hyperventilation or shortness of breath
  2. Headache, Dizziness
  3. Tingling arms, Goose bumps
  4. Chilliness, Poor coordination
  5. Confusion, agitation, uncooperativeness

f) Potential Risks of Extreme Heat Exposure:
- i. Heat Cramps- the mildest form of heat trauma, commonly related to low body sodium and chloride levels.
  1. Symptoms: Weakness, muscle cramps, collapse with low blood pressure.
  2. Treatment: Rest and cool down. Drink clear juice or an electrolyte-containing sports drink. Practice gentle, range-of-motion stretching. Do not resume strenuous activity for several hours. See a doctor if cramps don't resolve within one hour.
- ii. Heat Exhaustion - a more severe form of heat trauma.
  1. Symptoms: Cool, moist skin with goose bumps in the heat; heavy sweating; faintness; dizziness; fatigue; weak, rapid pulse; low blood pressure upon standing; muscle cramps; nausea; headache.
  2. Treatment: Stop all activity and rest. Move to a cooler place. Drink cool water or sports drinks. Contact your doctor if signs worsen or don't improve within one hour. Seek immediate medical attention if the person becomes confused or agitated, loses consciousness, or is unable to drink.
- iii. Heat Stroke - a medical emergency. Call 911 immediately if someone has a high body temperature and is unconscious or confused.
  1. While waiting for help: Move the person to a cool place if possible; apply cold water to large areas of skin or clothing; fan the person as much as possible.

9) High Heat and Humidity Combined (Humidex)

a) Heat and Humidity Policy:

i. Once the humidex range reaches 40, all activities must be cancelled.
ii. Once the range reaches between 30–39, the cancellation of races should be seriously considered.

b) What is Humidex?
i. Humidex is a measure of how hot we feel when heat and humidity combine at uncomfortable or dangerous levels.
ii. High heat and humidity lead to two problems in the exercising body: increased core body temperature and dehydration. Increased body temperature (hyperthermia) reduces muscle endurance and shifts energy production from aerobic to anaerobic mechanisms, depleting muscle energy stores more rapidly. High body temperature also decreases blood flow to the heart as blood pools in the limbs. Dehydration can occur long before athletes realize it - athletes can lose 2–8% of body weight during high-intensity exercise. Dehydration decreases VO2max efficiency and further reduces cardiac output.
iii. Symptoms of High Heat and Humidity:
1. Heat rash or prickly heat
2. Heat cramps
3. Heat exhaustion
4. Heat stroke

c) Why is Humidex Important?
i. When it is hot and humid, cooling through sweating becomes difficult. When relative humidity reaches approximately 90%, sweat does not evaporate. Body temperature may rise and lead to heat rash, cramps, heat exhaustion, and heat stroke.

d) Humidex Calculator:
http://www.ohcow.on.ca/edit/files/general_handouts/heat-stress-calculator.html

e) What can you do to combat or prevent the effects of high heat and humidity?
i. Exercise in the heat is usually associated with reduced performance. To combat or prevent the effects:
a. Schedule activities for cooler times of the day where possible.
b. Ensure everyone has enough water/hydration. Even well-hydrated athletes can be affected by heat illness.
c. Plan for plenty of breaks and keep rides shorter.
d. Fluid replacement is critical for events in high heat and humidity - it starts before an event, continues during it, and doesn't stop until long after.
e. Wear lightweight, light-coloured clothes of open-weave natural fibres (cotton, wool) or fluid-wicking fibres to increase evaporation and cool the body.
f. Acclimatize to higher temperatures and humidity during training.

10) Extreme Cold Policy

a) All cycling events and races must be cancelled when the temperature is -20°C or below, including the wind chill factor.

b) Common Cold-Weather Conditions:
i. Numbness
ii. Frostbite
iii. Frostnip
iv. Hypothermia

c) How can you reduce cold-induced issues?
i. Pay attention to the weather forecast: temperature, weather conditions, and wind chill.
ii. Get the right gear and coverage - layers are essential.
iii. Cover your head, hands, feet, and ears, as these areas are more susceptible to cold.
iv. Warm up before riding.
v. Avoid getting too sweaty.

vi. Hydrate well.
vii. Do not ride alone.

d) Warning Signs of Health Issues Related to Cold Exposure:
i. Tightness in the lungs
ii. Coughing
iii. Loss of breath
iv. Wheezing

e) Signs of Frostbite and Hypothermia:
i. Frostbite is an injury caused by freezing, most common on exposed skin (cheeks, nose, ears, hands, and feet). Early warning signs include numbness, loss of feeling, or a stinging sensation. Get out of the cold immediately if frostbite is suspected. Slowly warm the affected area, do not rub it. Seek emergency care if numbness does not go away.
ii. Hypothermia is abnormally low body temperature. When exposed to cold temperatures, the body loses heat faster than it can be produced. Exercising in cold, rainy weather increases risk. Older adults and young children are at greater risk.
iii. Hypothermia signs and symptoms include:
a. Intense shivering
b. Slurred speech
c. Loss of coordination
d. Fatigue
iv. Seek emergency help right away for possible hypothermia.

11) Wind Policy

NEW - REVISED SECTION (May 2026): Wind Policy now distinguishes between sustained winds and wind gusts, as gusts pose a distinct and often greater safety risk to cyclists. Event organizers and Commissaires must monitor both values.

a) Understanding Sustained Winds vs. Wind Gusts:
i. Sustained winds are measured as the average wind speed over a consistent period (typically 10 minutes) and determine baseline riding difficulty and event risk.
ii. Wind gusts are brief, sharp increases in wind speed above the sustained level, typically lasting a few seconds, and are often 20–30% higher than the sustained wind speed. Gusts pose a heightened risk because they are sudden and can cause cyclists to lose control, be pushed off course, or be struck by windborne debris without warning.
iii. OC policy applies cancellation thresholds to whichever value, sustained wind or gust speed, is reached first. If forecasted gusts alone meet or exceed a cancellation threshold, the event should be cancelled or modified even if sustained winds are below that threshold.

b) General Cancellation Thresholds:
i. All cycling events and races must be cancelled when sustained wind speed reaches 40 km/h OR when wind gusts reach 60 km/h.
ii. Once sustained winds reach 30–39 km/h OR gusts reach 45–59 km/h, cancellation of races should be seriously considered, particularly for junior, youth, and recreational events.
iii. In crosswind-exposed or elevated terrain, apply thresholds at the lower end of each range.

c) Wind Direction Considerations:
i. Crosswinds are generally more hazardous than headwinds for cyclists, as they can push riders sideways, affecting control, especially in group riding or peloton situations. Crosswinds of 25–30 km/h sustained (or gusts of 40+ km/h) should trigger course review.
ii. Event organizers should assess the course layout for exposed sections (open roads, bridges, elevated terrain) where wind funnelling can significantly amplify effective wind speeds.

d) Monitoring Requirements:
i. Organizers must monitor both sustained wind and gust forecasts using WeatherCAN or a verified weather service, with attention to updates in the 2 hours leading up to and during the event.

ii. If an Environment Canada Wind Advisory is issued (sustained winds 60+ km/h or gusts 90+ km/h for Ontario), the event must be cancelled without exception.

e) Wind Speed Guidelines (Sustained Wind / Typical Gust Range):

Sustained Wind Speed	Typical Gust Speed	Risk Description	Classification	Event Action
< 1 km/h	—	Still, calm air. Smoke rises vertically.	Calm	No action required
1 – 5 km/h	< 10 km/h	Rising smoke drifts, wind vane inactive.	Light Air	No action required
6 – 11 km/h	10–20 km/h	Leaves rustle, wind felt on face, vanes begin to move.	Light Breeze	No action required
12 – 19 km/h	20–30 km/h	Weathervanes move, leaves and small twigs rustle, lightweight flags extend.	Gentle Breeze	No action required
20 – 29 km/h	30–45 km/h	Strong enough to straighten flying flags, shake small tree branches. Dust and loose paper fly around.	Moderate Breeze	Monitor conditions closely
30 – 39 km/h	45–60 km/h	Small trees start to sway. Gusts can push cyclists offline, affect cornering, and make group riding unsafe.	Fresh Breeze	Consider cancelling activity. Mandatory cancellation if gusts exceed 50 km/h.
40 – 50 km/h	60–80 km/h	Strong enough to break umbrellas and move large tree branches. High risk of loss of control for cyclists.	Strong Breeze	Cancellation of activities
51 – 62 km/h	80–90 km/h	Walking difficult. Large trees sway. Cycling extremely dangerous.	Gale Force	Cancellation of event
63 – 74 km/h	90–100 km/h	Large loose objects fly. Tree limbs can break. Driving very difficult.	Gale Force	Cancellation of activities
75 – 89 km/h	100–115 km/h	Wind strong enough to damage structures. Shingles blown off roofs.	Strong Gale	Cancellation of activities
90 – 117 km/h	115–150 km/h	Wind can uproot entire trees.	Storm / Violent Storm	Cancellation of activities
118+ km/h	150+ km/h	Hurricane-force winds.	Hurricane	Cancellation of activities

12) Visibility Policy

a) Visibility is defined as the state of being able to see or be seen. In cycling events, this is described as the distance one can see as determined by light and weather conditions.

b) Once visibility reaches less than 100 metres, all activities must be cancelled.

c) Once visibility reaches less than 1 km, the cancellation of races should be seriously considered.

d) Cyclists should not be riding after dark unless they have equipment to make themselves visible to others, such as reflective clothing, a white handlebar light, and a red taillight.

e) Visibility Guidelines:

Visibility Category	Distance	Conditions	Event Action
Clear Visibility	30 km and above	Normal conditions	No action required
Good Visibility	5 – 29 km	Generally safe	Monitor conditions
Moderate Visibility	1 – 4 km	Reduced sight lines	Monitor very closely
Poor Visibility	< 1 km	Dense fog/smoke, blowing debris, heavy precipitation	Strongly consider cancellation. Mandatory if race organizer/Commissaire determines risk is unacceptable.
Zero / Very Low Visibility	< 100 metres (330 ft.)	Roads may be closed. Dense fog, heavy rain/snow, blowing sand, darkness.	Cancellation of all activities

13) Other Weather Conditions to Monitor

a) There are several other weather conditions that could put participants' health and safety at risk and cause potential damage to a venue site (e.g., fog, mist, haze, air pollution, rain, freezing rain, sleet, hail, snow).

b) Monitoring of the impact, visibility, and course conditions is the responsibility of the race's PCP, in consultation with their partners, the Race Organizer, and the OC Lead Commissaire and/or the Technical Delegate (if available). If this is a cycling recreational event, club, or team training/group riding activity, monitoring is the responsibility of the Event Organizer or Ride Leader/Club Administrator.

Condition	Monitoring Action	Hazard Notes
Fog	Monitor impact, visibility, and course conditions.	Visibility < 1 km. Hazardous due to ice formation, occasional freezing drizzle and snow.
Mist	Monitor impact, visibility, and course conditions.	Visibility 1–2 km.
Haze	Monitor impact, visibility, and course conditions.	Visibility 2–5 km.
Rain	Monitor impact, visibility, and course conditions.	Hazardous due to slippery surfaces.

Freezing Rain / Sleet	Monitor impact, visibility, and course conditions.	Hazardous due to ice formation.
Hail	Monitor impact, visibility, and course conditions.	Hazardous due to body impact and ice formation.
Snow / Snow accumulation on course	Monitor impact, visibility, and course conditions.	Hazardous due to slippery surfaces and cooling temperatures.

14) Tornado / Funnel Cloud Protocol

a) A tornado or funnel cloud represents an immediate and life-threatening weather emergency. Unlike lightning, there is no resumption window - all activities must cease and shelter must be sought immediately upon any tornado warning or confirmed sighting.

b) Conditions Requiring Immediate Action:

i. A tornado warning is issued by Environment Canada for the event area.

ii. A funnel cloud is sighted or reported by any participant, official, or spectator in or near the event venue.

iii. A tornado watch is in effect - organizers must be on high alert and prepared to act without delay.

c) Immediate Response Procedure:

i. The Lead Commissaire or Event Organizer must immediately suspend all activities and announce evacuation to shelter. Do not wait for visual confirmation if a warning has been issued.

ii. Direct all participants, officials, and spectators to a sturdy, interior building. If no building is available, direct participants to a low-lying ditch or depression away from trees, poles, and vehicles, and instruct them to lie flat, face down, protecting the back of their head with their arms.

iii. Stay away from windows, doors, and exterior walls. Interior rooms on the lowest floor (hallways, bathrooms, closets) offer the best protection.

iv. Cyclists must dismount immediately. Bicycles should not be ridden or used as shelter.

v. Vehicles, tents, portable structures, and open fields do not constitute safe shelter.

d) Resumption of Activities:

i. Activities may only resume once Environment Canada has lifted all tornado warnings for the area AND an authorized official has conducted a course and venue inspection to confirm conditions are safe.

ii. Unlike the lightning policy, there is no fixed wait time after a tornado. A full all-clear from the relevant authority is required before resumption.

e) Monitoring:

i. Organizers should monitor the WeatherCAN app and Environment Canada tornado alert maps throughout the event, particularly during periods of severe thunderstorm activity, when tornado risk is highest.

ii. A designated weather monitor should be assigned for all events held during active severe weather season (May through September).

15) Venue-Specific Conditions - BMX Tracks, Trails, and Off-Road Venues

a) Purpose and Scope: Off-road and BMX venues present distinct weather-related risks that differ from road and criterium events. Poor weather can cause rapid deterioration of track surfaces, creating hazards for riders and causing lasting damage to venue infrastructure. This section applies to all OC-sanctioned BMX, mountain bike, cyclocross, and trail-based events and activities.

b) General Principle: Event organizers and ride leaders must evaluate not only the safety of participants but also the potential for weather-related damage to the venue. Riding on saturated or frozen

surfaces can cause irreversible rutting, erosion, and structural damage. Protecting venue relationships is an OC priority.

c) BMX Tracks:
   i. Heavy rain - any rainfall that saturates the track surface, creates standing water, or produces a slick clay/mud layer - requires suspension of all track activity. Riding on a wet BMX track poses serious crash risks and can cause significant surface damage.
   ii. Activity should not resume until the track surface has drained sufficiently and the venue operator or track marshal has confirmed it is safe and rideable.
   iii. In hot, dry conditions, track watering (a standard BMX practice) should be adjusted or suspended if the surface becomes excessively hardened or cracked, creating an uneven jump surface hazard.
   iv. Wind gusts exceeding 40 km/h at BMX venues require close monitoring, as they can affect rider balance and trajectory mid-air on jump sections.

d) Trails and Mountain Bike Venues:
   i. Wet conditions - Riding on wet natural surface trails increases erosion, widens trail damage, and significantly increases crash risk due to root and rock exposure. Event organizers should apply an immediate suspension of trail activity when:
      1. Rainfall is occurring or has occurred within the preceding 24 hours on clay or loam trails.
      2. Mud accumulation is visible on high-traffic sections.
      3. The trail operator, land manager, or OC Technical Delegate has issued a wet-trail advisory.
   ii. Frozen conditions - Icy or frozen trails pose extreme slip hazards. Trail activity should be suspended when temperatures are at or below 0°C and any precipitation has occurred, or when frost is visible on exposed root or rock sections.
   iii. High winds at trail venues present additional hazards due to falling branches and debris. When sustained winds exceed 30 km/h or gusts exceed 50 km/h in wooded terrain, all trail activity should be suspended and participants cleared from the forest environment.
   iv. All trail riders and event organizers are expected to follow Leave No Trace principles and must not ride trails that are clearly marked or posted as closed due to weather conditions.

e) Responsibility:
   i. For sanctioned events, the Event PCP and Lead Commissaire share responsibility for evaluating track/trail conditions and making the call to suspend or cancel activity.
   ii. For club/team activities at off-road venues, the Ride Leader or Club Administrator holds this responsibility and must err on the side of caution when conditions are borderline.
   iii. When in doubt, don't ride. Protecting riders and the venue is always the priority.

16) Junior and Youth Participant Thresholds

a) Ontario Cycling recognizes that junior (under 17) and youth (under 23) participants are more vulnerable to the physiological effects of extreme weather conditions than senior athletes. Children and adolescents are also less able to self-regulate and communicate distress effectively. Accordingly, lower weather thresholds apply for all events and activities where junior or youth participants are present.

b) Application: These thresholds apply to any event, training session, club ride, or team activity that includes junior or youth participants - not only junior-specific categories. If a mixed-age event includes any junior or youth riders, the junior thresholds govern the decision to modify or cancel.

c) Junior/Youth Thresholds by Weather Type:
   i. Heat: Junior and youth activities should be cancelled or rescheduled when the humidex reaches 35 or above, or when the temperature alone exceeds 35°C. Mandatory cancellation applies at 40°C or humidex 40, consistent with the general policy.
   ii. Air Quality: For junior and youth participants, event modification (shortened course, reduced intensity) should be considered at AQHI 4 (Moderate), and cancellation of junior/youth events

should occur at AQHI 7 or above. This is consistent with the AQ policy table but is explicitly reinforced here for all event formats.

iii. Wind: For junior and youth events, the cancellation threshold is lowered to 30 km/h sustained or 45 km/h gusts (compared to 40 km/h / 60 km/h for senior events). At 20–29 km/h sustained, conditions should be closely monitored and course modifications (e.g., removing exposed sections) considered.

iv. Cold: Junior and youth activities should be cancelled or postponed when the wind chill is -15°C or below (compared to -20°C for the general policy).

v. Visibility: Cancellation of junior and youth activities should occur at less than 1 km visibility (compared to the general threshold of less than 100 metres for mandatory cancellation). At visibility below 2 km, conditions should be closely evaluated.

d) Supervision and Communication:

i. Coaches, ride leaders, and event officials are responsible for actively monitoring junior and youth participants for signs of weather-related distress throughout any activity and must not rely solely on participants to self-report.

ii. Parents and guardians should be informed of weather-related modifications or cancellations as early as possible through the club/event communication channels.

17) Policy Review and Currency

a) OC is committed to maintaining a Weather Policy that reflects current best practices, scientific evidence, and regulatory guidance. Weather science, Environment Canada alert criteria, and public health recommendations evolve over time, and this policy must keep pace.

b) Annual Review: This policy shall be reviewed by OC staff and relevant stakeholders no less than once per calendar year.

c) The annual review shall include:

i. A comparison of current OC thresholds against the latest Environment Canada Weather Impact Guides and public alert criteria.

ii. A review of any significant weather incidents or near-misses from the preceding season involving OC sanctioned events or club/team activities.

iii. Consultation with OC Commissaires, Event Organizers, and Club representatives to identify any practical gaps in the policy.

iv. A review of updates from relevant bodies including Cycling Canada, UCI, Sport Canada, and provincial sport governing bodies.

d) Out-of-Cycle Updates: If Environment Canada substantially changes its public weather alert system, or if a significant weather-related incident occurs in OC, OC may update this policy outside of the annual review cycle. Such updates will be communicated to all clubs, event organizers, and Commissaires promptly.

e) Version Control: Each version of this policy will be dated and stored in the OC document management system. The current version will be clearly identified on the OC website and provided to all sanctioned event organizers at time of event approval.

18) Compliance

a) Failure to follow the OC Weather Policy & Guidelines could affect the health and safety of riders and may lead to disciplinary action being taken.

b) All OC member clubs, event organizers, Commissaires, coaches, and ride leaders are responsible for familiarizing themselves with this policy and ensuring it is applied consistently at all OC sanctioned and affiliated activities.

c) Questions or concerns regarding the application of this policy should be directed to OC staff prior to an event. In-event decisions remain the responsibility of the designated authority as outlined in each applicable section.

Further Resources

Environment Canada — Weather, Climate and Hazards: https://www.canada.ca/en/services/environment/weather.html
WeatherCAN App: https://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/weather-general-tools-resources/weathercan.html
Environment Canada — Weather Impact Guides (updated 2025): https://www.canada.ca/en/services/environment/weather/severeweather/weather-alerts/weather-impact-guides.html
SIRC Canada — Air Pollution & Sport Safety: https://sirc.ca/air-quality-and-sport/
SIRC with Health Canada — Air Quality Guiding Document for Sport Organizations: https://sirc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/Air-Quality-Guiding-Document-FINAL-EN.pdf
Weather on the Way — Weather Safety Thresholds for Cyclists: https://weatherontheway.app/blog/weather-safety-thresholds-for-cyclists
Road Bike Rider — How Much Wind Is Too Much for Cycling?: https://www.roadbikerider.com/too-much-wind-cycling/