

# Minchinhampton Golf Club Adverse Weather Policy & Procedures

## 1 Policy

1.1 Minchinhampton Golf Club Limited will take all reasonable measures to minimise the risks to employees, contractor's staff and golfers from adverse weather condition by taking the following actions:

- **For golfers:**

- a) monitoring local weather reports
- b) monitoring local conditions during "storm warnings", and
- c) making this information available.

- **For employees:**

- a. Establish and maintain an effective system for advising employees when lightning is in the vicinity;
- b. Establish and maintain an effective "alert" system (i.e. signal) to advise those employees out on the courses when to cease and resume work;
- c. Provide protection from extreme heat, cold or high UV activity by issuing of appropriate weather (hot, cold) work gear and sunscreen creams, as appropriate;
- d. Provide advise as to how to stay safe on the course by avoiding tall objects (e.g. trees, masts, elevated stiles, high ground);
- e. Taking shelter in low lying areas such as bunkers.;

1.2 In the event of thunder and lightning, each person is responsible for ensuring their own safety.

1.3 When lightning is **IMMINENT** employees and golfers are expected to take shelter indoors where possible until it is safe to resume work/play. This is usually 30 minutes **after** the last clap of thunder.

1.4 Procedures to be followed by employees and golfers are set out in the following Sections.

1.5 At no time during an episode of thunder and/or lightning will anyone be expected to leave the safety of a building to go outside in order to sound a klaxon.

1.6 It is acknowledged that **LIGHTNING IS A SEVERE HAZARD THAT MUST BE VIEWED SERIOUSLY.**

1.7 It should be noted that bad weather, NOT accompanied by thunder and/or lightning, is not of itself sufficient reason to discontinue play.

## A **LIGHTNING**

## 2 Procedures to be followed by golfers (members and visitors)

- 2.1 Each golfer has a personal responsibility to be safe on a golf course and to be aware of the Club's Policy relating to adverse weather conditions in terms of general play and under competition circumstances.
- 2.2 Rule 6 of the Rules of Golf (2016) clearly sets out the golfer's responsibilities. In terms of adverse weather conditions during competitions, Rule 6.8 applies (see Annex 1 below).
- 2.3 Under general play, a player may discontinue play when in his/her opinion, lightning is a threat.
- 2.4 Minchinhampton Golf Club Limited recommends that if lightning is imminent, all play **MUST** be discontinued.
- 2.5 Minchinhampton Golf Club Limited accepts no liability for any injury to a golfer (member or visitor) who fails to comply with the requirements of this Policy and its Procedures and who continues to play when:
- there is a risk of lightning;
  - play is suspended;
  - the course has been closed due to adverse weather conditions.
- 2.6 Golfers who have not started their round will be provided with relevant information as to the threat of lightning, based on local weather details by either the Starter (on the first tee) or by staff in the Pro's shop (when making a tee booking). In the event that providing this information results in golfers missing their allotted tee time, every effort will be made to reschedule the booking at the soonest mutually convenient opportunity.
- 2.7 In the event that there is no early warning about lightning, all golfers on the courses will be expected to leave the course and proceed immediately to the club house without waiting for a klaxon to sound. A golf buggy does NOT provide protection from lightning. Golfers must **not** seek shelter under trees.
- 2.8 During the play of a formal competition there is an imminent risk of lightning, the following competition rules will apply:
- i. the competition will be suspended;
  - ii. each competitor will be required to stop play, to mark the position of their ball, lift the ball and then leave the course;
  - iii. any player continuing play after play has been suspended will be disqualified from the competition;
  - iv. the competition will be resumed only when it is safe so to do. If the competition committee does not consider it safe to resume play, the competition will be cancelled/abandoned.
- 2.8 During a lightning related delay, green fee-paying golfers who decide to **abandon** their round will not be eligible for a refund.

- 2.9 In the event that a visiting golfer's tee time cannot be rescheduled after a lightning related delay, a refund will be offered.
- 2.10 It remains the responsibility of each golfer to recover/retrieve any equipment they have left on the course during a lightning related delay when it is safe so to do.

### **3 Procedures to be followed by employees**

- 3.1 When lightning is imminent, a signal will be sounded for the cessation of all work on the courses.
- 3.2 Employees are then required to make their way to the nearest place of safety.
- 3.3 When the risk from lightning has passed a further signal will be sounded. Work may then be resumed.
- 3.4 Failure to comply with the requirements of this Policy and Procedures by employees may invoke the Disciplinary Procedures.

## **B FOG AND MIST**

### **4 Procedures to be followed by golfers (members and visitors)**

- 4.1 Each golfer has a personal responsibility to be safe on a golf course and to be aware of the Club's Policy relating to adverse weather conditions in terms of general play and under competition circumstances. See Annex 1 below - Rule 6 of the Rules of Golf (2016) clearly sets out the golfer's responsibilities. In terms of adverse weather conditions during competitions, Rule 6.8 applies.
- 4.2 In the event of poor visibility, each golfer is expected to exercise their own judgement on whether it is safe to play the course, or to suspend play (not start a round) until visibility has improved.
- 4.3 Minchinhampton Golf Club Limited will provide golfers with sufficient weather information for each golfer to make an informed decision as to the safety of all course users (other golfers, greens' staff) in the event of fog or mist, including recommending that play be suspended or the start of a round is deferred. In the event that providing this information results in golfers missing their allotted tee time, every effort will be made to reschedule the booking at the soonest mutually convenient opportunity.
- 4.4 Minchinhampton Golf Club Limited accepts no liability in the event of injury to a golfer during a period of poor visibility.

### **5 Procedures to be followed by employees**

- 5.1 In the event of fog or mist, all greenkeepers working on the course should wear:
- High visibility clothing
  - Protective headwear (e.g. bump caps) to reduce/eliminate the risk of head injuries.
- 5.2 If visibility is so poor, employees will be advised whether to suspend work on the course and when it is considered safe to resume work.
- 5.3 Sanctions to be applied to employees who fail to comply with this Policy and Procedures are stated in 3.4 above.

## **C ICE AND SNOW**

### **6 Procedures to be followed by golfers (members and visitors)**

- 6.1 Each user of the facilities at Minchinhampton Golf Club Limited's courses is expected to exercise their personal judgement to stay safe and avoid slips, trips and falls during periods of ice, snow or hail. Particular attention to safety may be required when walking to the 5<sup>th</sup> tee on the Avening Course.
- 6.2 At times of very cold weather, when there is a risk of ice on artificial surfaces, Minchinhampton Golf Club Limited will:
- a. take every reasonable effort to maintain the car park and the paths around the club house free from ice;
  - b. display slips/trips yellow Notice Boards at prominent places to advise users of the risk of falling due to the icy surface;
  - c. consider suspension of the use of buggies.
- 6.3 Golfers who decide to play the courses against the advice of the club's representatives, do so at their own risk. Minchinhampton Golf Club Limited will accept no liability under these circumstances.

### **7 Procedures to be followed by employees**

- 7.1 Employees who are expected to work outside during periods of cold weather will be provided with warm clothing. It should be noted that several layers of light clothing are better than a single heavy layer. Clothing that breathes and wicks away sweat from the skin is recommended.
- 7.2 As a significant amount of heat loss is through the scalp, a hat (preferably with a thermal line) should be worn.

- 7.3 Waterproof gloves with a separate thermal liner will keep fingers warm. This is especially important when using handheld vibrating tools, as this will reduce the risk of vibration injury (e.g. vibration white finger).
- 7.4 Boots and shoes should be waterproof and be able to protect the feet from crushing and impact damage.
- 7.5 Sanctions to be applied to employees who fail to comply with this Policy and Procedures are stated in 3.4 above.

## **D SUN, HEAT AND HUMIDITY**

### **8 General statement**

- 8.1 When it is hot, sunny and/or humid there is an increased risk of individuals becoming dehydrated, particularly if they are out on the courses during the hours of 12.00 to 15.00.
- 8.2. Players and members of staff with pre-existing medical conditions should consider the implications that dehydration may have on their health and whether any medicines they are taking (either prescribed or “over the counter”) could exacerbate the risk of dehydration, and take every reasonable effort to minimise the risk.
- 8.3 An additional risk that everyone on the courses should be aware of when the weather is hotter, is that of snakes. They will often come out of their nests near the walls on the Cherington to bask in the sunshine. The snakes that may be found on the courses are grass snakes (non-venomous) and adders (venomous). Adders are not aggressive snakes, but will bite if trodden on. Whilst a bite from an adder has not been fatal in the UK in recent years, such a bite can result in a range of symptoms (nausea, drowsiness, swelling/bruising in the area of the bite) that may vary in severity between individuals. It is essential that anyone bitten by an adder (see picture below) should call an ambulance immediately and advise the Call Centre that the person has suffered an adder bite as well as reporting the incident to the senior manager on duty at the club at the time of the incident and ensure that the relevant Incident Report Form is also completed as soon as practical.



### **9 Procedures to be followed by golfers**

- 9.1 Each golfer has a personal responsibility for the following when the weather is sunny, hot and/or humid:
- a) ensuring that they have sufficient non-alcoholic and non-caffeine beverages with them on the course;
  - b) ensuring they are adequately protected against the harmful UV rays by wearing long sleeved shirts/blouses, trousers rather than shorts, a hat or other suitable head covering;
  - c) using an appropriate sun block preparation (a minimum of Factor 30 is recommended by dermatologists);
  - d) using a buggy when prolonged exposure to the sun, heat and humidity is unavoidable.
- 9.2 Minchinhampton Golf Club Limited will make available drinking water for golfers through the bar services and the water dispenser in the Players' Entrance. On special occasions, additional water or cold drinks may be supplied at each of the Half-Way houses.

## **10 Procedures to be followed by employees**

- 10.1 Minchinhampton Golf Club Limited is responsible for providing appropriate clothing that will protect employees working on the courses from the adverse effects of sun, heat and humidity.
- 10.2 Each member of staff exposed to sun, heat and humid weather who has a pre-existing medical condition that is likely to be exacerbated by the effects of sun, heat and humidity, has a responsibility to advise their line manager of the condition and associated risks.
- 10.3 Each employee has a duty to wear the protective clothing (hats etc.) and sun block provided by Minchinhampton Golf Club Limited, unless there are clear reasons for not so doing that have been discussed with and recorded by their line manager.
- 10.4 Where appropriate and in order to protect the health of the employee, Minchinhampton Golf Club Limited may request and will pay for an Independent Occupational Health assessment.

## Rules of Golf - Rule 6-8 DISCONTINUANCE OF PLAY; RESUMPTION OF PLAY

### a. When Permitted

The player must not discontinue play unless:

- (i) the [Committee](#) has suspended play;
- (ii) he believes there is danger from lightning;
- (iii) he is seeking a decision from the Committee on a doubtful or disputed point (see [Rules 2-5](#) and [34-3](#)); or
- (iv) there is some other good reason such as sudden illness.

Bad weather is not of itself a good reason for discontinuing play.

If the player discontinues play without specific permission from the Committee, he must report to the Committee as soon as practicable. If he does so and the Committee considers his reason satisfactory, there is no penalty. Otherwise, **the player is disqualified.**

**Exception in match play:** Players discontinuing match play by agreement are not subject to disqualification, unless by so doing the competition is delayed.

**Note:** Leaving the [course](#) does not of itself constitute discontinuance of play.

### b. Procedure When Play Suspended by Committee

When play is suspended by the **Committee**, if the players in a match or group are between the play of two holes, they must not resume play until the [Committee](#) has ordered a resumption of play. If they have started play of a hole, they may discontinue play immediately or continue play of the hole, provided they do so without delay. If the players choose to continue play of the hole, they are permitted to discontinue play before completing it. In any case, play must be discontinued after the hole is completed.

The players must resume play when the [Committee](#) has ordered a resumption of play.

**PENALTY FOR BREACH OF RULE 6-8b:**  
**Disqualification.**

**Note:** The [Committee](#) may provide, in the conditions of a competition ([Rule 33-1](#)), that in potentially dangerous situations play must be discontinued immediately following a suspension of play by the [Committee](#). If a player fails to discontinue play immediately, **he is disqualified**, unless circumstances warrant waiving the penalty as provided in [Rule 33-7](#).

### c. Lifting Ball When Play Discontinued

When a player discontinues play of a hole under Rule 6-8a, he may lift his ball, without penalty, only if the [Committee](#) has suspended play or there is a good reason to lift it. Before lifting the ball the player must mark its position. If the player discontinues play and lifts his ball without specific permission from the [Committee](#), he must, when reporting to the [Committee](#) (Rule 6-8a), report the lifting of the ball.

If the player lifts the ball without a good reason to do so, fails to mark the position of the ball before lifting it or fails to report the lifting of the ball, **he incurs a penalty of one stroke.**

#### **d. Procedure When Play Resumed**

*Play must be resumed from where it was discontinued, even if resumption occurs on a subsequent day. The player must, either before or when play is resumed, proceed as follows:*

- (i) if the player has lifted the ball, he must, provided he was entitled to lift it under Rule 6-8c, place the original ball or a [substituted ball](#) on the spot from which the original ball was lifted. Otherwise, the original ball must be replaced;*
- (ii) if the player has not lifted his ball, he may, provided he was entitled to lift it under Rule 6-8c, lift, clean and replace the ball, or substitute a ball, on the spot from which the original ball was lifted. Before lifting the ball he must mark its position; or*
- (iii) if the player's ball or ball-marker is moved (including by wind or water) while play is discontinued, a ball or ball-marker must be placed on the spot from which the original ball or ball-marker was moved.*

**Note:** *If the spot where the ball is to be placed is impossible to determine, it must be estimated and the ball placed on the estimated spot. The provisions of [Rule 20-3c](#) do not apply.*

*\*PENALTY FOR BREACH OF RULE 6-8d:  
Match play – Loss of hole; Stroke play – Two strokes.*

*\*If a player incurs the general penalty for a breach of Rule 6-8d, there is no additional penalty under Rule 6-8c.*

This policy is effective from August 2017.