

Golf course lightning safety

According to the National Weather Service, golfers are killed by lightning more frequently than people engaged in any other sport or outdoor recreational activity. A lightning protection program can be implemented to reduce these serious injuries. Below are details to keep in mind when establishing a lightning protection program.

Weather reports/services

A common method used is keeping a television or radio tuned to a weather service channel in the clubhouse at all times.

Lightning detection/prediction equipment

Installing detection equipment on the grounds and near buildings can be helpful in determining the actual risk during a storm.

Lightning shelters

Constructing lightning protected shelters at strategic locations throughout the course can provide a place for guests to seek safety when a storm comes up while they are on the course. Buildings, particularly those partially or wholly of metal, located in isolated areas, and those prone to lightning strikes, should be provided with lightning protection meeting the

design requirements of National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 780, Standard for the Installation of Lightning Protection Systems. The relative exposure of a particular building will be an element in determining if the expense of protection is warranted. The location of the building in question, its proximity to other buildings, and to prominent terrain features, must be considered.

Posting warnings

Establishing a policy with regard to storms that could produce lightning is crucial. Communicating this policy clearly to customers can increase the success of enforcing it when a storm comes into play. Posting the policy on your golf carts, score cards, in buildings, and in locker rooms can increase golfers' understanding of the importance the club places on lightning safety.

Effective emergency planning

A section for lightning should be included in the overall emergency plan. This section should include:

- the course's lightning policy,
- who is responsible for implementing the plan,
- how guests will be notified of the threat of lightning, evacuation shelter locations, and how guests will be notified when the threat has passed

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