

Delaware Park Hazardous Weather Protocol

In anticipation of inclement weather events, the following protocols will drive the decision-making process to either delay or cancel racing and training. The concern for the equine athletes, riders and all other participants' safety serves as the main driver when these decisions are made, and decisions should always strive to err on the side of caution. Each weather incident is unique, and each will demand individual attention and analysis.

Modification to training hours or the race day program may include time advancement or delay if it appears possible the extreme conditions might ease or can be avoided.

The Purpose of this policy is to:

1. Assign responsibility in evaluating inclement weather events
2. Assign responsibility in determining postponement and cancellations of racing and training
3. Clarify the type of weather-related cancellations and corresponding protocols utilized

- 1) **Responsibility for evaluating inclement weather events.** It shall be the responsibility of the Safety Steward, Chief Commission Veterinarian, Track Management and Stewards on any race or training days to:
- Obtain and monitor current and forecasted weather conditions.
 - Initiate Hazardous Weather Protocols when necessary, and ensure the provisions are appropriately observed.
 - Communicate with racetrack personnel regarding requirements.
 - Throughout the day communicate Veterinarians and Horsemen regarding the conditions of horses.
 - Consider whether modifying the racing program may provide improved conditions.

Summary Table of responsibilities and responsible persons:

Activity	Training	Racing
Monitor Current & Forecasted Weather Events	Safety Steward Commission Veterinarians Track Management	Stewards, Safety Steward Commission Veterinarians Track Management
Decision to postpone or cancel due to extreme conditions	Safety Steward Commission Veterinarians Track Management	Stewards Track Management

2) **Postponement and Cancellation.**

Racing. In the event of an extreme weather condition the decision to cancel racing can be made by the Stewards or Track Management with input from the Safety Steward, Chief Commission Veterinarian, Horsemen and Jockeys.

Training. In the event of an extreme weather condition the decision to cancel training can be made by the Safety Steward, the Chief Commission Veterinarian, or Track Management.

Notification of racing or training cancellation or delay shall be communicated to the following:

- Track Management / Director of Racing
- Delaware Thoroughbred Racing Commission
- Delaware Thoroughbred Horsemen Association

3) **Inclement Weather Events.** Severe or harsh weather environmental conditions that may include, without limitation:

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| a. Heat Index | e. Precipitation |
| b. Low Temperatures or Wind Chill | f. Air Quality |
| c. High Winds | g. Fog/Visibility |
| d. Lightning | |

- a) **Heat Index** – The Heat Index shall be obtained from the National Weather Service (weather.gov). The NWS Heat Index may be based on either the NWS Heat Index Chart or NWS Heat Index Calculator.

Heat Index Forecast. If the heat index is forecasted to be above 105 the day before a race card or training, the Safety Steward, Chief Commission Veterinarian and Track Management shall meet to decide if racing or training should be canceled.

Heat Index during Racing or Training. If the **Heat Index exceeds 105** during racing or training will mandate immediate cancellation.

If **Heat Index exceeds 95, but is below 105**: racing will proceed with the following provisions:

- Post parades will be shortened to limit horses' time exerting.
- Grooms/trainers will be encouraged to bathe horses in the paddock and after racing.
- Real time heat index will be monitored through the race card.
- Horses can be scratched for inclement weather without any penalty.
- Jockeys may be excused from their mounts without any penalty.

- b) **Low Temperatures or Wind Chill.** Delaware Park currently does not train or race in winter months. If at such time training or racing does exist during winter, low temperature protocols will be developed. Until such time, the Safety Steward, Track Management and Commission Veterinarians shall meet to reach a decision on canceling or delaying training or racing due to cold weather.

- c) **High Winds.**

Racing. In the event of high wind conditions, the decision to cancel or delay racing can be made by the Stewards, Safety Steward, Chief Commission Veterinarian, or Track Management and confirmed by the Stewards.

Training. In the event of high wind conditions, the decision to cancel or delay training can be made by the Safety Steward, Chief Commission Veterinarian, or Track Management.

- d) **Lighting.** Strike Guard, a real-time lightning detector and warning system is installed that provides both text messages and warning lights placed on the tote board, in the paddock and at the training track. The detection service includes strike distance and radius notifications to provide lightning delay decision-making. The Strike Guard broadcast the following text messages:

- **11-20 Miles (Caution)**
- **6-10 Miles (Warning)**
- **0-5 Miles (Alarm)**

If a lightning strike is detected within five (5) miles (Alarm) all activities training and/or racing are to be suspended immediately and the track(s) and starting gate are to be cleared.

Training. Clockers are to immediately notify outriders, track maintenance and stable gate that lightning has been detected and everyone is to clear the track and seek shelter.

1. Track and starting gate are cleared of humans and equines.
2. A delay of fifteen (15) minutes begins.
 - a. If another strike is detected an additional fifteen (15) minutes will be added, this continues until the cell has left the area and an all clear is broadcasted.
 - b. If this is a race day, training may be cancelled to allow for proper time to prepare the racing surface for racing. This will be determined by the track superintendent.

Racing. Stewards are to immediately notify all parties that a lightning has been detected, racing is temporarily suspended, and everyone is to immediately seek shelter

1. Immediate Actions

- a. If horses are in paddock, they shall remain there, and depending on severity, shall remain in stalls under cover. Pony people and their horses shall seek cover in the paddock.
- b. Starting gate crew are to seek shelter away from the starting gate.
- c. If horses are in route for the next race, and have not reached the racing surface, they should seek shelter in a barn. If the horses are on the racing surface, they should seek shelter in the closest area available, the paddock or barn area.
- d. The Paddock Judge shall broadcast to the backside instructing trainers to keep their horses in their barns and remain there until an all-clear is given.
- e. In the event the race is loading into the gate and a strike is detected within five (5) miles then the race shall be delayed and the horses with jockeys ordered back to the paddock.

2. Continued Delay and All-Clear

- a. If another strike is detected an additional fifteen (15) minutes will be added, this continues until the cell has left the area and the Stewards broadcast an all clear for racing to resume. Close monitoring of the storm direction and size shall take place to determine if any additional delay would be prudent.
- b. If an all clear has NOT been given within thirty (30) minutes from the posted post time of the race when the first lightning strike occurred, then that race is cancelled and following race can be called over when there is an all-clear.

e) **Precipitation.** When precipitation is forecasted the Track Superintendent will analyze the following:

- Total amount of rainfall.
- Duration of rainfall.
- Predicted timing relative to training or racing.

Dirt Track. Any decision to race on a sealed or floated track will be made based upon a decision by the Track Superintendent that in his or her professional opinion the resulting track surface is safe for the conduct of races.

No Racing or Training shall be permitted on any surface deemed unsafe by the Track Superintendent or Board of Stewards.

High speed workouts may resume only when approved by the Track Superintendent.

Turf Track. During a rain event the Turf Track Supervisor will continually monitor the turf course to determine if the turf course is safe. If the Turf Track Supervisor determines there the turf course could be unsafe, he will notify the General Manger immediately. The decision to take races off or leave races on the turf shall be made by the Track Management.

- f) **Air Quality.** The U.S. Air Quality Index (AQI) developed by the Environmental Protection Agency to measure air quality shall be used as the guideline for determining air quality. The higher the number (1-500), the higher the level of concern. The projected AQI for a given location can be found at <https://www.airnow.gov/>.

AQI Forecast for Racing or Training. If the AQI is forecasted to exceed 149 the day before a race card or training, the Safety Steward, Chief Commission Veterinarian, Track Management and Stewards shall meet to decide if training or the race card should be canceled.

Racing. If the **AQI exceeds 174** during a race card racing will be immediately cancelled for the remainder of the card.

If the **AQI exceeds 149 and is below 175** racing will proceed with trainers allowed to scratch as a weather related with no penalty and jockeys allowed to not ride without penalty.

Training. Training has two different Training protocols, Race and non-Race Day, in order to further to protect the safety of all participants, including outriders, gate crew, veterinarians, ponies, etc.

Training on Race Day. If the **AQI exceeds 149** training will be canceled.

Training on non-Race Day. If the **AQI exceeds 149 and is below 175**, training will be limiting to jogging only. No galloping or breezing permitted.

- g) **Fog/Visibility.**

Racing. In the event of impaired visibility, the Stewards and the jockeys shall meet to determine if the races should be cancelled or delayed. If the evidence indicates that visibility will improve, the races may be delayed for a period not to exceed one hour, at which time the group will meet again to decide if the races can safely continue.

Training. In the event of impaired visibility during training, the Safety Steward and Outriders shall meet to determine if training should be cancelled or delayed.