

SCCA Lightning Safety Policy

SCCA RallyCross events will take all steps necessary to mitigate the risk and avoid endangering competitors, workers and spectators from cloud-to-ground lightning.

Thunderstorms are an acknowledged fact in many parts of the county. The National Weather Service warns of severe thunderstorms, but those warnings DO NOT include lightning. Any thunderstorm, by definition, contains lightning. Event venues are often located away from metro areas where real-time weather information is readily available.

If a NOAA Weather Radio is available, it should be used as an up-to-date source of information.

The 30-30 rule will be used to determine when to halt competition and when to restart in the interest of safety. It is based on scientific observations and principles related to lightning activity in, and around, thunderstorms. The Safety Steward for the event will be the decision maker in this matter. The 30-30 rule follows these guidelines:

1. when lightning approaches, count the number of seconds between the observation of the lightning flash and hearing the thunder. If that number is 30 or less, competition will be suspended. This means lightning is within 6 miles of the observer.
2. After the lightning threat has passed, wait 30 minutes after the last observation of cloud-to-ground lightning within 6 miles of the competition site. Lightning has been observed to strike the ground some 10 miles outside of the thunderstorm itself.

The Safety Steward will locate the safe areas onsite. This could be a well-constructed building (pole barns and bleachers do not count), if available. If not available, competitors, workers and spectators should be instructed to get inside their vehicles, roll the windows up and do not touch anything metal. Under no circumstances should a person be standing outside in the course, pit, paddock or spectator areas during a thunderstorm.

This statement does not consider other types of severe weather that may result from a thunderstorm (large hail, high winds, heavy rain and tornadoes).