

OC Weather Policy May 2026 – Summary

Here is a summary listing the key points of the Ontario Cycling (OC) Weather Policy and Guidelines released May 21, 2026. For full details, please refer to the official OC document [here](#).

Ontario Cycling (OC) considers the health and safety of all cyclists an absolute priority. This policy applies to all OC sanctioned cycling events, club, and team activities.

NEW in 2026: add wind gusts of 60 km/h as reason to cancel ride/race
 add cross-winds at lower thresholds as reason to cancel ride/race
 add tornado/funnel cloud protocol
 add venue-specific conditions

Extreme weather conditions may include, but are not limited to:

- 1) Thunder/Lightning
- 2) Strong Winds
- 3) Air Pollution (AQ)
- 4) Extreme Heat
- 5) Extreme Cold
- 6) Poor Visibility
- 7) Other: freezing rain, hail, snow, etc.
- 8) Tornado/Funnel Cloud Protocol
- 9) Venue-Specific Conditions

OC strongly recommends that local weather forecasts be monitored closely by the event organizers and the club.

The decision to cancel or resume an event will be made by the Event Organizer and/or Ride Leader(s).

1) Thunder/Lightning Policy

No outdoor activities will be initiated when thunder and/or lightning is present.

After a ride has started, in the event of thunder or lightning, the ride will be stopped and safe shelter found. A safe shelter is defined as a sturdy building that has metal plumbing or wiring, or both, to electrically ground the structure. A shed or a shack is not a safe shelter. Stay away from tall or individual trees, lone objects (flagpoles), metal objects, standing pools of water, and open fields. Avoid close contact with others by maintaining a distance of 15-20 feet.

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.**

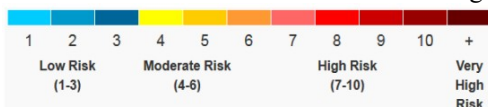
2) Wind Policy

Once the sustained wind speed reaches between 30 – 39 km/h OR gusts reach 45-49 km/h, the cancellation of races should be seriously considered.

All cycling events and races must be cancelled when the wind speed reaches 40 km/h OR when wind gusts reach 60 km/h. Crosswinds of 25– 30 km/h sustained (or gusts of 40+ km/h) should trigger course review as they can push riders sideways, affecting control, especially in group riding or peloton situations.

3) Air Quality Policy

The Air Quality Health Index (AQHI) presents the relative health risk for short-term exposure to common air pollutants on a scale of 1 to 10+. There are four health categories:



If the AQHI value is high (over 7), move the session indoors, cancel or reschedule it to another time.

4) Extreme Heat Policy

Once the temperature (humidex) reaches between 35° - 39° C, the cancellation of races should be seriously considered. Once the temperature (humidex) reaches 40° C, all activities must be cancelled.

5) Extreme Cold Policy

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

6) Visibility Guidelines

When visibility is less than 1 km, monitor closely.

When visibility is less than 100 m, cancel cycling activities.

7) OTHER WEATHER CONDITIONS TO MONITOR

There are several other weather conditions that could put participants' health and safety at risk (e.g., Fog, mist, haze, air pollution, rain, freezing rain, sleet, hail, snow). Monitor closely and cancel rides if appropriate.

Compliance: Failure to follow the 'OC Weather Policy & Guidelines' could affect the health and safety of riders which may lead to disciplinary action being taken.

8) Tornado / Funnel Cloud Protocol

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. This includes a tornado warning by Environment Canada or sighting by any participant, official, or spectator in or near the event venue. If a tornado watch is in effect, organizers must be on high alert and prepared to act without delay.

Event Organizer must immediately suspend all activities and announce evacuation to shelter (sturdy, interior building or 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).

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.

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

Riding on saturated or frozen surfaces can cause irreversible rutting, erosion, and structural damage. Protecting venue relationships is an OC priority.

Trails and Mountain Bike Venues: Event organizers should apply an immediate suspension of trail activity when: 1. Rainfall is occurring or has occurred within the preceding 24 hours 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. When in doubt, don't ride. Protecting riders and the venue is always the priority.

The Newmarket Eagles Cycling Club will attempt to announce ride cancellations with 2 hours notice ahead of the scheduled time on WhatsApp, and/or the home page of the NECC website and/or via email, so please check for communications before heading out. Please exercise caution when deciding to ride.