**WEATHER POLICY**

**(Including Air Quality and Extreme Heat)**

Reviewed by BCC Board: February 2020; Reviewed by BCC Board: February 2024

The Barrie Cycling Club (BCC) is committed to safety and will implement reasonable practices to ensure the safety of those participating in BCC rides.

Ride leaders are responsible for tracking weather conditions (e.g. Environment Canada/Weather Network) leading up to the ride. Ride leaders are responsible for cancelling rides, for any weather-related reason, regardless of the conditions, forecasts and alerts in place. If a ride leader is not comfortable leading a ride in the forecasted weather conditions, then they must cancel the ride. If a ride leader is unsure, then they are to contact the president who will make the final decision. The president will notify the membership of the cancelations by email and by social media.

**ENVIRONMENT CANADA’S “PUBLIC ALERTING PROGRAM”**

Environment Canada issue four different types of severe weather alert. The alerts range in severity:

• Special Weather Statements are the least urgent type of alert and are issued to let people know that conditions are unusual and could cause concern;

• Advisories are issued for specific weather events (like blowing snow, fog, freezing drizzle and frost) that are less severe, but could still have a significant impact;

• Watches alert the public of weather conditions that are favourable for a storm or severe weather, which could cause safety concerns; and

• Warnings are urgent messages that severe weather is either occurring or will occur.

**MANDATORY RIDE CANCELLATION**

The BCC requires ride cancellation by Ride Leaders if:

• An Environment Canada severe weather “Warning” is in effect during the scheduled ride time (e.g. tornado warning, severe thunderstorm, etc); and

• Lightning is forecast anywhere along the route during the schedule ride time.

Any members who choose to still ride when a club ride has been cancelled will do so at their own risk!

Ride cancellations should be communicated by ride leaders/the president via email and if possible, the on the Club website under “News” and Facebook account.

• Best practice is to cancel the ride at least 1.25 hours before the ride start time.

• Give a brief weather-related rationale for the cancellation.

If there are no Watches or Warnings issued, but extreme conditions are forecast, it is up to the ride leader to decide whether or not to cancel. Extreme conditions are defined as heavy rain, strong winds, or any other weather conditions that makes riding dangerous. Common sense should prevail in these situations.

**UNEXPECTED POOR WEATHER**

If a ride has already started and is later faced with inclement weather, ride leaders should practice the following:

• Pull off of the road where safe to do so and then discuss plans to either:

• Seek temporary shelter if available;

• Return to the ride start point taking as direct a route as safely possible; or

• Ride an alternate route to avoid the weather if time and the group’s ability allows.

**ONTARIO CYCLING ASSOCIATION LIGHTNING POLICY:**

[www.ontariocycling.org/forms/lightning-policy/](http://www.ontariocycling.org/forms/lightning-policy/)

Note:

Guideline for Ride Cancellations – for those difficult to decide to cancel or not days

* refer to the BCC Weather Policy posted under Policies on the www.barriecyclingclub.com website
* Cancel, if possible 1.25 hours before a ride to allow those who travel from a distance to change their plans.
* Cancellations will be posted on our Facebook page.  Encourage members to join.
* Decisions are to be made in combination with the radar report and percentage of rain in the riding area.
* Cancel if there is a high possibility of thunderstorms (over 50%)
* Cancel if there is a high possibility of rain (over 70%) or the amount of rain is above 1mm per hour making roads quite wet, and thus increases more rooster tail spray from tires (never fun).  Less than 1mm per hour is just a light drizzle and very ridable.
* Route direction and distance may change from those originally planned to accommodate weather changes

**Air Quality Policy**

* 1. Air quality in Ontario is generally good, but due to various reasons, that might not be the case on the day of a planned ride. As a Ride Leader, it is important to monitor your local air quality to ensure participants in any outdoor cycling activities are protected from exposure to poor air quality.

**The Ride Leaders of the Barrie Cycling Club will use the following AQHI guidelines from Ontario Cycling, to make the decision to cancel a ride or not:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Air Quality Category** | **Message** | **Action for Events** |
| **Good**  Visibility: 15 km and Up  **AQHI 1-3** | Ideal air quality for outdoor activities | Ideal conditions for a ride |
| **Moderate/ Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups**  Visibility: 5-14 km  **AQHI 4-6** | Be aware of health effects of smoke and related symptoms | Be aware of health effects of smoke and related symptoms |
| **Unhealthy Visibility: 2.5-4 km**  **AQHI 7** | Reduce or re-schedule strenuous activities, especially if you experience symptoms | Consider reduction of length of ride, delay for a few hours and/or cancellation.  Cancel ride based on the hourly forecast.  Provide warning to riders with respiratory issues. |
| **Unhealthy**  **Visibility: 2.5-4 km**  **AQHI 8** | Re-schedule strenuous activities | Cancel ride. |
| **Very Unhealthy**  **Visibility 1.5-2 km**  **AQHI 9-10** | Avoid prolonged strenuous activities and stay indoors if possible | Cancel all rides and training |
| **HAZARDOUS**  **Visibility: < 1.0 km**  **AQHI 10+** | Avoid all strenuous activities and stay indoors | Cancel all rides and training |

**Extreme Heat Policy:**

* 1. a) Once the temperature reaches **40o C**, all activities must be cancelled.
  2. b) Once the temperature reaches between 35o - 39o C, the cancellation of rides should be seriously considered.
  3. c) With high heat temperatures across Ontario, all clubs must take precautions to ensure all members are safe. It is the responsibility of the ride leaders to monitor local temperatures and decide exactly which precautions must be taken- including the cancelling of any ride.

**The Barrie Cycling Club’s Weather Policy is intended to ensure safety through brevity and plain language.**