



# MANITOBA SOCCER ASSOCIATION POLICIES AND ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES



## AIR QUALITY POLICY

### STATEMENT

This document provides background information regarding air quality, as well as direction for Member Organizations, match officials, and team officials when outdoor air quality is poor.

### Incorporating the Air Quality Health Index (AQHI) into Practices and Matches

Member organizations, coaches, and team officials should be aware of the health risks associated with participating in high intensity exercise (i.e., practices or matches) in poor air quality conditions. Use the following:

- If the AQHI value is “3” or below: continue with practices/matches as normal.
- If the AQHI value is “4-6”: matches may be played and practices adjusted by:
  - Reducing the intensity;
  - Reducing the duration of the practice; and/or
  - Providing extra rests and breaks.
- If the AQHI value is “7-10”: reschedule the practice or match to a different date or find alternative indoor facilities to hold the practice or match.

In order to protect players and match officials, be aware of weather and environmental factors that might impact air quality by keeping up with:

- Current weather forecasts;
- Forest fires in your area;
- Local stubble burning;
- Sudden and dramatic changes in wind strength and direction;
- Field proximity to major roads or highways; and/or
- Field proximity to or downwind from any industrial areas or other significant emission sources.

### ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

This policy employs the best scientific information available (i.e., the AQHI, which is coordinated by both Environment Canada and Health Canada) to determine if air quality could negatively affect players, team officials, match officials, and spectators. This policy will be updated as new knowledge becomes available.



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1. Go to Manitoba's AQHI webpage  
([https://weather.gc.ca/airquality/pages/provincial\\_summary/mb\\_e.html](https://weather.gc.ca/airquality/pages/provincial_summary/mb_e.html)).
2. Click on the nearest AQHI location.
  - a. Brandon, Flin Flon, or Winnipeg
3. Note the location, time, date, and AQHI value.
  - a. AQHI values are updated hourly and a forecast for the subsequent 24 hours is provided.
  - b. Use the AQHI value that is within one hour of the scheduled kick-off or practice time.
  - c. Table 1 in this policy details the health risks at different AQHI values.
  - d. If the AQHI value is "7" or higher: practices and matches should be cancelled. (See step 4 and 5 for further details.)**
4. Matches
  - a. If matches have not been cancelled in advance all teams and match officials should arrive ready to play.
  - b. If the AQHI value is still "7" or higher at the scheduled start of the match, the match officials (in consultation with the teams involved) should consider delaying the start of the match (providing there is enough time to complete the match) or cancelling the match.
    - i. At the field, match officials reserve the final right to cancel the match if the conditions are considered dangerous.
    - ii. If a match is cancelled at the field due to poor air quality, a match official should write on the game sheet:
      1. Reason for abandonment – poor air quality.
      2. The AQHI value – "7" or higher.
      3. Time, date, and location of the reported AQHI value.
5. Practices
  - a. If the AQHI value is "7" or higher, team officials should reschedule practice until a later time for player safety.



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Table 1. Interpreting Air Quality Health Index Values

Health Risk	AQHI	Health Message	
		At-risk Population*	General Population
<b>Low Risk</b>	<i>1-3</i>	Enjoy your usual outdoor activities	<b>Ideal</b> air quality for outdoor activities
<b>Moderate Risk</b>	<i>4-6</i>	<b>Consider reducing</b> or rescheduling strenuous activities outdoors if you are experiencing symptoms	<b>No need to modify</b> your usual outdoor activities unless you experience symptoms such as coughing and throat irritation
<b>High Risk</b>	<i>7-10</i>	<b>Reduce</b> or reschedule strenuous activities outdoors. Children and the elderly should also take it easy	<b>Consider reducing</b> or rescheduling strenuous activities outdoors if you experience symptoms such as coughing and throat irritation
<b>Very High Risk</b>	<i>10+</i>	<b>Avoid</b> strenuous activities outdoors. Children and the elderly should also avoid outdoor physical exertion	<b>Reduce</b> or reschedule strenuous activities outdoors especially if you experience symptoms such as coughing and throat irritation

\* People with heart or breathing problems are at greater risk. Follow your doctor's usual advice about exercising and managing your condition.

Source: <https://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/air-quality-health-index/understanding-messages.html>



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APPROVED BY: Manitoba Soccer Association Board of Directors

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