

Saskatchewan Rugby

# Air Quality Monitoring Guidelines



July 2021

## Air Quality Monitoring Guidelines

This document serves as a guideline for Saskatchewan Rugby member organizations including Sub Unions, clubs, team officials, players and match officials. As a guideline, it suggests what should be considered in assessing air quality at local fields and awareness of potential health impacts.

On days when air pollution levels are significantly elevated, individuals may experience symptoms such as increased coughing, throat irritation, headaches, or shortness of breath. People participating in sports or strenuous work outdoors breathe more deeply and rapidly allowing more air pollution to enter the lungs. It is recommended that when the Air Quality Health Index (AQHI) is 7 or higher to reduce or reschedule strenuous activities outdoors.

### Policy

1. An Air Quality Health Index (AQHI) reading of 7 or higher on the day of a game or practice or the day before in the case of a weekend event shall initiate processes to determine whether the activity should continue or be cancelled/postponed.
2. The AQHI Canada App shall be the definitive source for Air Quality Health Index readings for your location.
  - a. Updates usually occur hourly (at the top of the hour)
  - b. Use the Next 18 Hour Forecast that is within one hour of scheduled kick-off or practice time.
3. Any concerns about air quality submitted to the Committee under this policy shall note the location, time, date, and current Index reading.

### Authority

1. A three-person Air Quality Ad-Hoc Committee shall be struck to make the decision to cancel or postpone a match in advance of kickoff due to air quality issues. This Committee shall consist of the following members:
  - a. Sask Rugby Executive Director
  - b. SRRS rep (either the President or appropriate Sub-Union rep)
  - c. The appropriate Match Organizer for the type of match:
    - i. For games organized by and under the authority of a sub-union: Sub-Union Scheduler (either RRU or NSRU)
    - ii. For tournaments: Tournament Organizer/Scheduler

- iii. For exhibition matches: the individual or party responsible for organizing match logistics including teams, match officials, and physios
2. In the case where the Ad-Hoc Committee cannot come to a unanimous decision about whether a match should take place or be postponed, the Match Organizer shall have the final say on whether the match takes place as scheduled.
3. The members of this Committee shall notify all relevant parties (e.g. teams, match officials, physios, clubhouse operators, etc.) of any cancellation or postponement using every method possible: e.g. email, social media, and websites.
4. Individuals with concerns about the viability of a future match due to air quality issues should use the following lines of communication to raise their concerns:
  - a. Participating teams and clubs should contact the Match Organizer that will represent them on the Air Quality Ad-Hoc Committee (see previous item).
  - b. Assigned match officials should contact the appropriate SRRS rep.
  - c. Community members not captured in the previous two categories and other concerned observers should contact the Sask Rugby Executive Director.

### **Time Frames**

1. The deadline(s) to make a decision in advance regarding cancellation or postponement shall be as follows:
  - a. For a weekday (Monday-Friday) event/match, a decision on cancellation/postponement is to be made and communicated by 2 p.m. on the day of the game.
  - b. For weekend events, a decision is to be made and communicated by 2 p.m. on the Friday preceding.

### **Games**

1. If the game has not been cancelled in advance by the Air Quality Ad-Hoc Committee, all teams and Match Officials should arrive ready to play.
2. If the AQHI is still above 7 at the scheduled kick-off time, the teams involved and the Match Officials should consider delaying kick-off or cancelling the game.

- a. The Match Official reserves the final right to cancel the game if the conditions are considered dangerous, in the Match Official's opinion.
  - b. Match Official is to submit in writing to the appropriate Sub-Union(s) Scheduler the reason for abandonment with the Index calculation, time & date at the location of the scheduled match.
3. If air quality changes dramatically during the match (e.g. sudden smoke event caused by wind direction change) Match Officials and Team Officials are advised to use their discretion. Record all decisions and communicate relevant information to the appropriate Sub-Union Scheduler.
  4. If a game must be abandoned, whether before kick-off or mid-game, due to air quality issues, the Saskatchewan Rugby Rules of Competition will apply, particularly sections 8.4 and 9.2 (ii).

## Practices

1. The following steps should be followed for training sessions or practices:
  - a. If air quality is "3" or below continue with training as normal
  - b. If air quality is an index of 4-6 then team officials should prepare to adjust practice by:
    - Reducing the intensity
    - Reducing the duration of the practice.
    - Providing resting periods
  - c. If air quality is "7" or above, team officials should reschedule or cancel the practice.
2. Team officials should be aware of weather and other conditions that may affect the AQHI reading at their scheduled practice time:
  - a. Current fires and their locations in or around the province
  - b. Local burning of stubble on fields or agricultural fields - these can increase particulate matter in the air without impacting the AQHI for a city.
  - c. Sudden and dramatic changes in wind strength and direction.
  - d. Proximity of any major road or highway.
  - e. Near or downwind if any industrial areas or other significant emission resources.