

McPherson Recreation Commission Heat Policy

The McPherson Recreation Commission has implemented the following guidelines to deal with extreme heat for all McPherson Recreation Commission games, practices, and other outdoor activities. It is designed to provide participants with a safety standard in extreme heat situations.

The two values that the MRC will consider when modifying or canceling games/practices/events are air temperature and relative humidity. The combination of these two elements reflects the **heat index**. We will rely on the heat index reading that is updated hourly by the National Weather Service from Wichita.

The MRC has defined five heat index zones. These zones are based on recommended guidelines published by the American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM) for participation in sports activities during periods of extreme heat. Because the heat index does not take into account wind and direct sunlight, two degrees will be added to the stated heat index on sunny and still days. Likewise, two degrees will be subtracted on cloudy and windy days.

White Zone

Heat index of **65-80** degrees. In this range, the participant is in very little danger from heat and the MRC will take no special measures.

Yellow Zone

Heat index of **81-98** degrees. In this range, coaches/instructors will be encouraged to take extra steps to protect their participants by making sure they keep them hydrated and by encouraging frequent substitutions or rest periods during games, practices, and events.

Orange Zone

Heat index of **99-104** degrees. In this range, the MRC will implement the following at games: all measures taken in the Yellow Zone; catchers will be allowed to catch only two innings in succession. If it is a practice day, coaches are instructed to keep players well-hydrated and to take frequent breaks.

Red Zone

Heat index of **105 to 109** degrees. In this range, the MRC will implement the following for games: all measures taken in the Yellow and Orange Zones; the length of games will be modified according to the schedule below. If it is a practice day, coaches are instructed to reduce the time of practice, take frequent breaks, and keep players well-hydrated.

- T-Ball/Baseball/Softball – These games will be reduced by 15 minutes
- Soccer – These games will be reduced by 2 minutes per quarter
- Flag Football – These games will be reduced by 5 minutes per half

Additionally, catchers can only catch for one inning now, and there will be water breaks between every inning for everyone.

Fitness Classes/Events Instructors will reduce the time of the program, take frequent breaks, and keep participants hydrated. If applicable, classes could be moved indoors.

Black Zone

Heat index above **110** degrees. In this range, the MRC will cancel all games and events until the heat index returns to 110 or below. Coaches should also use this guideline to cancel all practices.

Note - During the day, the heat index will rise and fall depending upon the time of day, amount of wind, cloud cover, etc. Decisions about game cancellations (Black Zone) will be made by 4:30 pm for evening games. All other zones will be determined at least 1 hour before the first scheduled games. All games that day will finish with the guidelines from which the first games started.

These heat guidelines will be in effect for Summer Youth T-Ball/Baseball/Softball, Spring and Fall Soccer, Fall Flag Football, and youth and adult fitness classes and events. The Black Zone guideline will also be in effect for all Adult Softball leagues (Spring, Summer, and Fall).

The above are merely guidelines. It is the responsibility of parents to make the ultimate decision as to the participation of their child in MRC events when heat or cold may be a factor, taking into consideration the age and physical condition of their child. Parents also have the ultimate responsibility to inform their child about the dangers of heat and the need for protection, including sunscreen and proper hydration.