

CITY OF BRAMPTON

SPORTS FIELD RAIN OUT PROTOCOL

The **criteria** used by Parks staff to determine if a sports field is judged to be unplayable is:

<p>RECTANGULAR SPORTS FIELDS:</p>	<p>a. Visual puddles of water on the surface of the field, or b. Water sponging up around your feet when you walk on the field.</p> <p><i>Note: The game official is also responsible for calling the game unplayable if he/she deems the sports fields or weather conditions unsafe for play</i></p>
<p>CLAY BALL DIAMONDS:</p>	<p>a. Visual puddles of water on the surface of the infield or turf area, or b. Water sponging up around your feet when you walk on the field c. Complete saturation of the clay. Noticeable sinking when walking across the surface</p> <p><i>Note: The game official is also responsible for calling the game unplayable if he/she deems the sports fields or weather conditions unsafe for play</i></p>
<p>CRICKET & BALL DIAMONDS (non-clay)</p>	<p>Parks and Sport Brampton staff will not normally call a non-clay ball diamond or a sports field scheduled for a cricket match unplayable. However if it is deemed that play will effect the condition of the diamond/field, the City reserves the right to do so.</p> <p><i>Note: The game official is also responsible for calling the game unplayable if he/she deems the sports fields or weather conditions unsafe for play</i></p>

If the conditions listed above are in existence a sports field is considered to be “UNPLAYABLE.” Parks and Sport Brampton staff will make every effort to have the current playability status of selected sports fields available to the user groups through the various communication mediums it has available, (eg. Sport Brampton, Corporate Call Centre, City web site).

Please remember that field conditions can quickly deteriorate during inclement weather, especially with late afternoon thunderstorms that produce large amounts of precipitation, and it may not be possible for Parks and Sport Brampton staff to provide an update to an earlier report. Therefore, if your group is at a sports field with the above criteria in existence, you are asked **NOT** to play on the field. In addition to this being a potentially dangerous safety concern for all participants, you may cause damage to the field resulting in costly repairs. Parks staff will complete an Incident Report to document any groups having been discovered playing on an “unplayable” sports field. The permit holder shall pay for all damages to the sports field arising from the use of the Facility where the Permit Holder (or those in attendance in connection with the Rental Agreement) is deemed responsible for such damage, as determined by the Chief of Planning & Infrastructure Services or his/her designate.

For further details, please see Sports Field Rain Out Protocol – Addendum “A”

PROCEDURE TO FOLLOW IF INCLEMENT WEATHER

WEEKDAYS: Call Sport Brampton between 2:00pm – 4:00pm or visit www.brampton.ca on the day of your permitted game or practice to obtain a report on field conditions. From 4:30pm - 11:00pm please call the Corporate Call Centre or visit www.brampton.ca, especially if weather conditions have deteriorated during the day.

WEEKENDS: Call the Corporate Call Centre (open 24 hours) or visit www.brampton.ca.

NOTE: Please notify Sport Brampton at 905-874-BOOK (2665) by the **next business day** following a cancelled booking(s) due to inclement weather to receive the appropriate credit (i.e. a rescheduled booking(s), permit extension or credit).

IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

Corporate Call Centre: 311 or 905-874-2000
Sport Brampton: 905-874-BOOK (2665)

THE CITY OF BRAMPTON RESERVES THE RIGHT TO CANCEL ANY PERMIT SHOULD THERE BE A BREACH OF THE CONDITIONS AND REGULATIONS OF THE PERMIT.

SPORTS FIELD RAIN OUT PROTOCOL – ADDENDUM “A”

Sports Fields:

The sports field inventory includes both City-owned and school fields, where the City and School Boards work together to maintain fields. With the continued growth in sport groups, there is an increasing demand for additional sports fields and tournament facilities. The City has worked closely with many sports groups to guide the future development of sports fields in Brampton.

As the City's sports field inventory continues to grow, so too does the commitment to provide safe, quality sports surfaces for casual and organized users. Unscheduled practices that occur on sports fields during the fall and early spring season incrementally contribute to the reduced density of the fields, which may cause turf failure months later during the summer playing season. Keeping the City's sports fields in optimum condition involves managing the amount of play a field receives and allowing time for proper maintenance to occur. The continued co-operation between the City and sports groups is a critical component of this management.

Background:

The City of Brampton Parks and Recreation Department was one of the first municipalities in Ontario to develop a Sports Field Rain Out Protocol. The Protocol was developed through input received from numerous community groups. The Protocol was implemented in an effort to not only protect participants involved in an outdoor sporting activity from potential serious injury due to dangerous turf conditions, but to be fiscally responsible to the taxpayers.

Many other municipalities followed Brampton's lead, and today most have a Rain Out Protocol.

Brampton's Rain Out Protocol has continued to evolve over the years through helpful dialogue with various groups that have expressed their concerns with a “one size fits all” Rain Out Protocol.

Staff recognize that not all sports activities are the same. Some activities, such as ball and cricket, play the majority of their game in one specific area of the field (e.g. the infield of a ball diamond or the wicket on a cricket pitch), with minimal play in the outfields. As a result, Brampton's Rain Out Protocol for ball and cricket groups is slightly more forgiving and flexible than other groups like soccer, football, field lacrosse, etc. However, during heavy periods of rain the moisture levels on the infield skin of a baseball diamond often reach maximum saturation. Once this point is reached the infield skinned area becomes unsafe as players will typically sink as they walk/run across the skinned surface.

Soccer, field lacrosse and football, on the other hand, play their complete game or practice on the turf, have many more players on the turf, wear footwear that can damage the turf, and perform many more moves on the turf (quick acceleration, deceleration, cutting, slashing, tackles, etc) that can quickly damage the playing surface.

Field Closures:

Poor weather conditions or unsafe field conditions are the primary reasons for sports field closures. Experience has shown that most turf damage occurs with field overuse or use during inclement weather. If your home field is damaged as a result of play on an unplayable field or during inclement weather, Sport Brampton may not be able to provide you with an alternate facility. Thus it is in everyone's best interest to ensure that fields are not used if play is damaging the playing surface. In order to meet the demand for high quality fields and ensure a safe playing field, both weather and field conditions are monitored on a daily basis to ensure that scheduled games do not:

- Compromise personal safety of league players or general public
- Cause damage to the field surface
- Jeopardize further scheduled use of fields

Factors to be Considered When Parks Inspect Sports Fields for Playability:

Staff understands how important it is for groups to play their scheduled games. In fact, nothing makes staff happier than to see participants engaged in a healthy, competitive, athletic activity. Unfortunately, the reality is that over the course of a season, inclement weather may result in sports fields becoming unplayable on any number of occasions.

There are some situations when Parks and Sport Brampton staff will consider other factors than the existing standing water on a sports field or water sponging up around their feet when judging a sports field's playability. These factors include the following considerations:

- Championship game of a tournament, playoff or season
- Game determines the Brampton representative team for a League or Provincial Championship
- The game involves a team from out-of-town that has left for Brampton or has already arrived
- A high profile event
- The sports field is being re-graded at season's end, and this is the last game of the year.
- A saturated field, with more inclement weather predicted later in the day or evening.

Enforcement of Rain Out Protocol:

Parks and Sport Brampton staff will make every effort to have the current playability status of selected sports fields available to the user groups through the various communication mediums it has available (eg. Sport Brampton, Corporate Call Centre, City web site).

Please remember that field conditions can quickly deteriorate during inclement weather, especially with late afternoon thunderstorms that produce large amounts of precipitation, and it may not be possible for Parks and Sport Brampton staff to provide an update to an earlier report. Therefore if your group is at a sports field with these conditions in existence, you are asked NOT to play on the field, In addition to this being a potentially dangerous safety concern for all participants, you may cause damage to the field, resulting in costly repairs. Parks staff will be required to complete an Incident Report to document any groups having been discovered playing on an “unplayable” sports field. The permit holder shall pay for all damages to the sports field arising from the use of the Facility where the Permit Holder (or those in attendance in connection with the Rental Agreement) is deemed responsible for such damage by the Chief of Planning and Infrastructure Services or his/her designate.

Any team or league that is the subject of an Incident Report shall receive a letter from Sport Brampton advising that they are NOT to play on an unplayable field, and further that the team/league is financially responsible for any damages to the sports field as a result of their indiscretion. **Any teams caught playing on an unplayable field may forfeit the right to play on that field for the remainder of the season.** A reminder will also be included that advises the team/league that a second infraction of this nature will result in further financial compensation to the City for any damages, and/or suspension of the team/league’s permit for the balance of the existing season and/or the following season (if the current season is close to completion).

Should a third infraction occur within the same season, financial compensation to the City must be provided, and the permit will be suspended for the balance of the existing season and the full season that follows.

Field Open - Coaches Responsibilities:

Please remember that although fields may be judged “playable” by Parks staff early in the day, weather and field conditions may deteriorate by game time. In these situations, it is the responsibility of field users NOT to play on a field if there are visual puddles of water, or water sponging up around your feet when you walk on the field.

Coaches are also asked to avoid high use areas near the goals when using fields for practices.