

SPORTSFIELD RAIN OUT PROTOCOL

The **criteria** used by Parks and Recreation staff to determine if a sportsfield is judged to be unplayable is:

<p>SOCCER PITCH</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 there is lightning or if he/she deems the sportsfield unsafe for play.</i></p>
<p>BASEBALL DIAMOND/ CRICKET PITCH</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 there is lightning or if he/she deems the sportsfield unsafe for play. Parks and Recreation staff will not normally call a diamond or a cricket pitch unplayable, however they reserve the right to do so.</i></p>

If the conditions listed in either a. or b. above are in existence, then a sportsfield is considered to be “UNPLAYABLE.” Staff will make every effort to have the current playability status of selected sportsfields available to the user groups through the various communication mediums it has available, (eg. Recreation Department “Rentals Unit”, 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 staff to provide an update to an earlier report. Therefore, if your group is at a sportsfield 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. Staff will complete an Incident Report to document any groups having been discovered playing on an “unplayable” sportsfield. The permit holder shall pay for all damages to the sportsfield 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 Commissioner of Community Services or his/her designate.

For further details, please see the Sportsfield Rain Out Protocol – Addendum “A” at www.brampton.ca

PROCEDURE WHEN INCLEMENT WEATHER OCCURS

Please visit www.brampton.ca or contact the below locations on the day of your permitted game/practice to obtain a report on field conditions, especially if weather conditions have deteriorated during the day.

	Hours of Operation
Rentals Unit – 905-874-BOOK (2665)	Monday to Friday: 2:30-4:30pm
Corporate Call Centre – 311	Monday to Friday: 4:30-11pm, Saturdays, Sundays, Holidays

If you are not in the Brampton area, the Corporate Call Centre can be reached at 905-874-2000.

NOTE: Please notify the Recreation Department 905-874-BOOK 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).

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

For more information regarding the Rain Out Protocol, please visit www.brampton.ca



SPORTSFIELD RAIN OUT PROTOCOL – ADDENDUM “A”

Sportsfields:

The City of Brampton is responsible for the maintenance of 5 soccer stadiums, 156 sportsfields (with 11 overlapping cricket pitches) and 138 ball diamonds.

The sportsfield 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 sportsfields and tournament facilities. The City has worked closely with many sports groups to guide the future development of sportsfields in Brampton.

As the City's sportsfield 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 sportsfields during the fall and early spring season incrementally contribute to the reduced turf density of the fields, which may cause turf failure months later during the summer playing season. Keeping the City's sportsfields 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:

Brampton Parks and Recreation Department was one of the first municipalities in Ontario to develop a Sportsfield 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, these sports have minimal impact on the turf.

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 turf.

As a result, Brampton's Rain Out Protocol for ball and cricket groups is slightly more forgiving and flexible than for other groups like soccer, football, field lacrosse, etc.

Field Closures:

Poor weather conditions or unsafe field conditions are the primary reasons for sportsfield 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, the Recreation Department 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 the general public
- Cause abnormal damage to the field surface
- Jeopardize further scheduled use of fields

Factors to be Considered When Staff Inspect Sportsfields for Playability:

Staff understand 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 sportsfields becoming unplayable on any number of occasions. Generally speaking, sportsfields are more prone to being judged unplayable in the springtime and autumn, as the water table is usually higher at these times of year. Isolated summer pop-up thunderstorms also create havoc on an otherwise beautiful summer day, potentially resulting in rain in one part of the City and no rain in another part of the City.

Sports groups also must realize that no two sportsfields drain exactly the same way. If the sub-surface is comprised of sand, it will drain more effectively than a field comprised of clay. Similarly if the slope of a field is pronounced, sheet drainage will occur more rapidly than on a field with a reduced (or no) slope.

There are some situations when Staff will consider other factors than the existing standing water on a sportsfield or water sponging up around their feet when judging a sportsfield'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 sportsfield 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:

If a sportsfield has visual puddles of water on its surface, or if water sponges up around your feet when you walk on the field, it is considered to be "unplayable". Staff will make every effort to have the current playability status of selected sportsfields available to the user groups through the various communication mediums it has available, (eg. Recreation Department "Rentals Unit"; Corporate Call Centre; City web site; signage at stadiums and other designated major locations).

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 staff to provide an update to an earlier report. Therefore if your group is at a sportsfield 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. Staff will be required to complete an Incident Report to document any groups having been discovered playing on an "unplayable" sportsfield. The permit holder shall pay for all damages to the sportsfield 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 Commissioner of Community Services or his/her designate.

Any team or league that is the subject of an Incident Report shall receive a letter from the Rentals Unit 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 sportsfield 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 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.

Parks Maintenance:

Parks and Recreation staff provide turf maintenance services for all city parks and fields, select school fields, most boulevards and city grounds, including City cemeteries. In addition, trail infrastructure, maintenance and litter control services are carried out year-round to help ensure that Brampton's parks and green spaces remain clean and safe for residents of all ages and abilities to enjoy.

For field, park and trail maintenance or other inquiries please contact 905-874-2906 weekdays from 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. or leave a message after regular hours and we will contact you on the next business day.

Booking Fields and User Fees:

The City's sportsfields are allocated to the various sports clubs in Brampton, however they are also available for rental by Brampton companies or community adult groups. Fields are charged an hourly rate, with user groups being allocated blocks of time as scheduled prior to the commencement of the summer playing season.

To book Sportsfields, please call 905-874-BOOK (2665).

Brampton Sport Alliance:

The City of Brampton's twenty-three youth sport affiliates meet regularly to discuss facility-related issues with City representatives. These meetings serve to provide all stakeholders with an opportunity to address current and long-term issues associated with the administration, maintenance and sustainability of City-maintained facilities.