

MHSAA Model Policy for Managing Heat and Humidity

Adopted March 22, 2013

1. Thirty minutes prior to the start of an activity, and again 60 minutes after the start of that activity, take temperature and humidity readings at the site of the activity. Using a digital sling psychrometer is recommended. Record the readings in writing and maintain the information in files of school administration. Each school is to designate whose duties these are: generally the athletic director, head coach or certified athletic trainer.
2. Factor the temperature and humidity into the Heat Index Calculator and Chart to determine the Heat Index. If a digital sling psychrometer is being used, the calculation is automatic.

3. If the Heat Index is below 95 degrees:

All Sports

- o Provide ample amounts of water. This means that water should always be available and athletes should be able to take in as much water as they desire.
- o Optional water breaks every 30 minutes for 10 minutes in duration.
- o Ice-down towels for cooling.
- o Watch/monitor athletes carefully for necessary action.

If Heat Index is 95 to 99 degrees:

All Sports —

- o Provide ample amounts of water. This means that water should always be available and athletes should be able to take in as much water as they desire.
- o Optional water breaks every 30 minutes for 10 minutes in duration.
- o Ice-down towels for cooling.
- o Watch/monitor athletes carefully for necessary action.

Contact sports and activities with additional equipment:

- o Provide ample amounts of water. This means that water should always be available and athletes should be able to take in as much water as they desire.
- o Optional water breaks every 30 minutes for 10 minutes in duration.
- o Ice-down towels for cooling.
- o Watch/monitor athletes carefully for necessary action.

Contact sports and activities with additional equipment:

- o Helmets and other possible equipment removed while not involved in contact.

Reduce time of outside activity. Consider postponing practice to later in the day.

Recheck temperature and humidity every 30 minutes to monitor for increased Heat Index.

If Heat Index is 99 to 104 degrees:

All Sports —

- o Provide ample amounts of water. This means that water should always be available and athletes should be able to take in as much water as they desire.
- o Mandatory water breaks every 30 minutes for 10 minutes in duration.
- o Ice-down towels for cooling.
- o Watch/monitor athletes carefully for necessary action.
- o Alter uniform by removing items if possible.
- o Allow for changes to dry t-shirts and shorts.
- o Reduce time of outside activity as well as indoor activity if air conditioning is unavailable.
- o Postpone practice to later in the day.

Contact sports and activities with additional equipment:

- o Helmets and other possible equipment removed if not involved in contact or necessary for safety. If necessary for safety, suspend activity.

- Recheck temperature and humidity every 30 minutes to monitor for increased Heat Index.

If Heat Index above 104 degrees:

All Sports

- o Stop all outside activity in practice and/or play, and stop all inside activity if air conditioning is unavailable.

Note: When the temperature is below 80 degrees there is no combination of heat and humidity that will result in need to curtail activity.

— See Next page for Heat Index Chart —



Note: By its very nature, a “model” policy is intended to be flexible so that when it is being considered for local adoption, local authorities can factor in the details of their unique facilities and schedules as they prescribe the manner in which this heat and humidity management policy is implemented.

Remember that even with rigorous implementation of this policy, the need remains for supervising staff to provide for adequate hydration and rest breaks at all times and places, and to arrange for cooling devices and strategies that respond to heat illness emergencies.

1. Where do I find a device that automatically provides the heat index?

A Most health care professionals with whom schools work know about these devices, called digital psychrometers, and know where to obtain them. Many medical supply stores carry the devices. Even Home Depot does.

If you Google “Devices for measuring heat and humidity,” you will find many options.

The MHSAA has established a relationship with School Health which has provided the accompanying information sheet. Place orders by phone, 866-323-5465, or by fax, 800-235-1305, or by email, orders@schoolhealth.com, or via Web, sportshealth.com. School Health accepts credit card or PO payments or can invoice schools. Discount pricing will be received by referring to the reference code for the particular item, MK90727 (Heat Watch) or MK61253.

–SEE NEXT PAGE FOR FURTHER DETAILS–

2. If I don't have a digital psychrometer that provides the heat index calculation, how do I get readings for temperature and relative humidity, and how do I calculate the heat index?

A A thermometer and humidity gauge will usually be necessary. Get each reading and then refer to the “Heat Index Calculation and Chart” to determine the heat index.

3. Are there cell phone applications that can be utilized?

A There are cell phone applications that can do the calculations. There are also applications that can provide the heat index at certain locations, but those locations are unlikely to be close enough to the actual site of the practice or event to be useful.

Readings will differ indoors and out, on hills or in valleys, on natural grass or artificial turf. These and other variables make it necessary for the person designated to record and file the readings to actually take those readings 30 minutes before and 60 minutes into the activity.

4. Where in the school should the readings be filed?

A They should be placed on a regular and frequent basis in files maintained in the office of the superintendent, principal or athletic director. Those files may be electronic. Coaches might record the readings on their written practice plans which schools should then keep on file.

5. Are there any MHSAA sports or any venues for which the policy is inapplicable?

A Every practice and competition in every sport at every venue is intended to be subject to the policy when the temperature at the venue nears 80°F.

In the case of swimming & diving, the risk is greater to spectators than participants, who compete in water that may be cooler than the air temperature.

While most attention will be given to outdoor sports, do not neglect conditions at indoor venues, such as volleyball in facilities that are not air conditioned.

While most attention will be given to early fall and late spring activities, do not neglect conditions for winter sports, such as in the wrestling room.

Sometimes conditions will vary for different aspects of the same competition. For example, one tennis court may be in the shade, and another out of the wind. One part of a cross country course may be much hotter or more humid than other parts. The best course of action is to take the heat index at the place of the most severe conditions.

6. Who and what control when there are multiple devices and different heat index readings at a venue?

A Host management makes the decisions to suspend and to resume activity using those devices or systems usually relied upon at that venue.

7. After a heat index reading that would require delay or suspension of activities, is there a period of time that must pass before activities resume?

A No. Readings can be taken continuously during the delay or suspension of activities. When relief from high temperature and humidity is unlikely, local authorities should be implementing previously-considered contingency plans to relocate events to different venues or reschedule events to different days or times.

8. May a school decide to implement this model policy for practices but not regular season contests?

A Yes. However, MHSAA tournament managers will follow this policy for MHSAA tournament contests.

9. When the temperature at the site of the activity is less than 80°, do we need to check and record the heat and humidity?

A No. When the temperature is less than 80°, there is no combination of heat and humidity that will result in a need to curtail activity.

However, if the temperature is near 80°, it would be prudent to record that temperature in the usual way and to have a digital psychrometer programmed to alert you to increasing temperature or a heat index that prescribes precautions.

10. The Model Policy calls for a heat index reading 30 minutes before and 60 minutes into an activity. How frequently thereafter should the heat index be checked for half-day or day-long events?

A A reasonable expectation is to continue to check every 60 minutes while the temperature is 80°F or higher.



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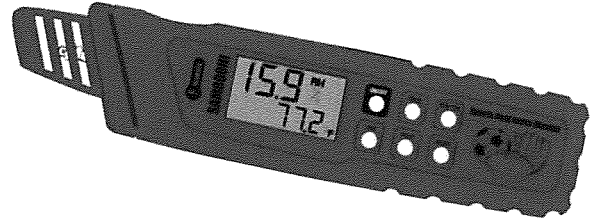
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