



AQI/Excessive Heat Policy

The health and safety of our players and coaches is paramount. GHSC practices and games may be cancelled due to unhealthy air quality or extreme heat. We always want to err on the side of caution when health and safety are involved. Please know that parents or guardians are the decision makers as to what is best for their player. In addition, coaches have the discretion to cancel practice even if the club does not. Again; parents/guardians may hold their kids out of practices or games even if the club/team does not cancel.

With regard to air quality, GHSC will use an average of 2 or 3 AQI sources in conjunction with other data points (forecast, map appearance and wind direction/forecast) to determine our recommendation/decision.

GHSC uses the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Air Quality Index values, which can be found on Airnow.gov. They are as follows:

- AQI 0-50: Good
- AQI 51-100: Moderate
- AQI 101-150: Unhealthy for sensitive groups*
- AQI 151-200: Unhealthy
- AQI 201-300: Very Unhealthy
- AQI 301-500: Hazardous

*Per the EPA, "sensitive groups" includes children.

For a comprehensive description of AQI measurements and values, please see the EPA's [Guide to Air Quality and Your Health](#). When we have an AQI between 101-130, we may cancel, or we may strongly encourage our teams (especially the younger ones – U6 and U8) to cancel, or we may allow practices to continue under strict guidelines. Remember; if you can smell smoke, you are breathing in particulate matter. If GHSC allows practices to proceed; for those teams that wish to have practice, we require them to severely curtail physical activity and have a chalk talk or **very** low intensity drills. Coaches are encouraged to contact Director of Coaching Jason Drury for ideas regarding the chalk talk and/or low intensity drills.

When we have an AQI above 130, GHSC cancels all practices and games. During the week, we will do our best to have a decision made between 2:00pm-3:00pm and your AGC will notify coaches. Please note that if we cancel, and the AQI improves by practice time, the cancellation holds. As far as game days, we will do our best to have a decision made by our playing league the night before or no later than 7:30am Saturday morning.

With regard to extreme heat, GHSC follows a general rule that if the forecast is for 103 degrees at 5:00pm, practice is cancelled. However, we also pay heed to [the US Soccer's Recognize to Recover Heat Guidelines](#), paying particular attention to the Wet Bulb Globe Temperature (WBGT), which takes into account five weather related factors to provide an accurate measurement of the environmental heat stress risk. For our area, a WBGT value above 92 (see the chart in the aforementioned US Soccer document) will result in GHSC cancelling practices or games. As with an AQI cancellation, we will do our best to have a decision made between 2:00pm-3:00pm during the week, and the night before or no later than 7:30am Saturday morning for games.

When the temperature is between 95-102 degrees, coaches are required to limit physical exertion and allow frequent water breaks. Again, if a coach believes that it is too hot for their team to practice, they have the discretion to cancel. We encourage coaches for our younger teams (U6 and U8) to be especially cautious in determining if their team should practice.

For games played in hot weather, GHSC and our playing partners cancel at 103 degrees. For games played in 95-102 degree heat, the referees/game monitors will allow for extra water breaks. The number and duration of the breaks is at the referee/game monitor's discretion. Referees (in U19-U19 games) also have the discretion and authority to cancel games if they believe it is too hot to safely play.