

Heat Index Guidelines for NEFL

The NEFL has implemented the following guidelines to deal with extreme heat at all youth football games and practices. It is designed to provide participants with a standard for safe play in situations of extreme heat. The two values that the NEFL will take into account when modifying or canceling games/practices 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 at the Indianapolis Executive Airport.

GENERAL HEAT GUIDELINES

If the heat index is under 95 degrees:

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

The NEFL has defined THREE 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.

YELLOW Zone Heat index of 95-99 degrees.

In this range, the NEFL will implement the following:

- Provide ample amounts of water. This means water should always be available and athletes should take in as much water as they desire.
- Mandatory water breaks every 20 minutes. Breaks should be in a shaded area.
- Ice-down towels for cooling
- Watch/monitor athletes carefully for necessary action
- Players to wear lightweight material shirt over pads.
- Helmets and other possible equipment removed if not involved in contact.
- Re-check temperature and humidity every 30 minutes to monitor for increased Heat Index

ORANGE Zone Heat index ranging of 100 to 104 degrees. In this range, the NEFL will implement the following:

- Provide ample amounts of water. This means water should always be available and athletes should take in as much water as they desire.

- Mandatory water breaks every 20 minutes for 10 minutes duration.
- Ice-down towels for cooling
- Watch/monitor athletes carefully for necessary action
- Reduce practice time to maximum of 80 minutes (not counting 10 min water breaks)
- Players to wear lightweight material shirt
- Maximum of 30 minutes in Pro-Pads (helmet, pads, shorts). Remainder of practice in shorts and shirt.
- Re-check temperature and humidity every 30 minutes to monitor for increased Heat Index

RED Zone Heat index above 104 • In this range, the NEFL will cancel all games and practices. Stop all outside activity and indoor non air conditioned activity until the heat index returns to 104 or below.

Note- During the course of the day, the heat index will rise and fall depending upon the time of day, amount of wind, cloud cover, etc. The above program modifications could also change throughout the course of the day, especially on a weekend. For example, a 9am game on Saturday could be played under the Orange Zone guidelines and a 12:45pm pm game could be played under Red Zone guidelines. Coaches and parents will be informed of the appropriate zone of play through internal communication, email and Facebook. These heat guidelines will be in effect for summer/fall Football season. The above are merely guidelines and it is the responsibility of parents to make the ultimate decision as to the participation of their child in NEFL events when heat 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 need for protection, including sunscreen and proper hydration.

Game Modifications for Heat Zones

Yellow Zone:

3 Minute breaks between quarters with all players having access to water

8 Minute Halftime

All timeouts will be 2 minutes in length to allow for ample water consumption.

Orange Zone:

No Games will be played in the Orange Zone

Red Zone: All Games Postponed