

Johnson City Parks & Recreation Field Policy

The decision to open or close a field is not necessarily based on the weather at any given time but, rather on the condition of the fields. After heavy or extended periods of rain, many fields often need hours or even a day or two to dry out and become playable. Conversely, there may be occasions when a field(s) may remain open even if it is raining and the fields are not saturated. In an effort to prevent injuries and to maintain quality playing fields, the Johnson City Parks & Recreation Department (“Department”) will enforce the following policy and procedures when fields become un-safe or saturated.

Policy

The Department recognizes the preservation and maintenance of its sports fields to the highest standards. This policy benefits the department’s programs/events and other user groups and preserves important City assets. In order to preserve these fields and to promote their use, the Department is committed to protecting the fields against non-permitted use as well as use during inclement weather conditions. The City will not allow play on fields when a heavy rainfall has occurred within an 8-hour period prior to field use when the field is saturated and/or there is evidence of surface water. The definition of a saturated field is one where the soil cannot absorb any additional moisture and water runs off the surface or pools on the field. The easiest method to determine if a field is saturated is to walk on the playing surface. This is at the sole discretion of the Department employee. The Department also reserves the right to close a field(s) for renovation or repair.

Procedures

The Athletic Manager will make every effort to ensure that all groups receive the Policy.

- Designated staff shall contact the Athletic Manager or designee immediately when conditions warrant the closing of sports fields.
- Once a field has been deemed unplayable, the Athletic Manager or designee will contact the Permit holder by telephone, email, or text, as predetermined at the time the Facility Use Agreement is signed by both parties. If the decision is made prior to 3:00 p.m. on weekdays or 8:00 a.m. on weekends the Department will contact the permit holders to advise them of the closure. After 3:00pm on weekdays or 8:00 a.m. on weekends, the Permit holder will have access to the Department’s Text Alerts.
- To receive text alerts, individuals should text 77948 and enter COJC.5.
- The Athletic Manager or designee will update the Text Alerts on the date and time fields are closed. The Alerts will reflect closures only with the appropriate date.

- Once fields are closed from 3:00pm onward, they will not be reopened unless approved based on a site visit by the Athletic Manager or designee.
- Parks staff will complete the following at every field when this policy is in effect:
 - A. "Field Closed" signs will be installed at the park or field.
 - B. Fields will be inspected by the Athletic Manager or designee prior to re-opening and with the appropriate restrictions removed.
- For major tournaments/events involving out of town teams, the City will try to accommodate by allowing scheduled games to be played when possible.
- Groups that are impacted from the policy may reschedule the fields through the Athletics office and when fields are available. Should a rescheduled date not be available, a request for refund will be processed by the Athletic Manager.

The Department will use the following progressive system to enforce the policy:

- If users refuse to leave after being requested to do so by a Department employee, Law Enforcement will be contacted. A copy of the Incident Report will be forwarded to the Athletic Manager.
- The Athletic Manager or designee will schedule a meeting with the user within one week of the incident and will take necessary action up to and including the canceling of future permits. Users may also be held responsible for any and all damages that occurred during the unauthorized use.
- Any further occurrence may result in the cancellation of permits for a period of one year for the user and/or their organization.
- An appeal of the Athletic Manager's decision may be made in writing to the Parks & Recreation Director within 14 days of the decision. The decision of the Director is administratively final. The written appeal should be mailed to:

Johnson City Parks & Recreation
Attn: Parks & Recreation Director
4137 Bristol Highway
Johnson City, Tennessee 37601