EXTREME HEAT POLICY

The OSSAA recognizes that exertional heat related illness is the leading cause of preventable death in high school students participating in activities. The Board adopted the following policies:

- All athletic coaches are required to view *A Guide to Heat Acclimatization and Heat Illness Prevention* at www.NFHSLearn.com, annually. A certificate of completion shall be kept on file for each coach or Marching Band Director at the member school. All marching band staff must view the Band Safety course on www.NFHSLearn.com.
- Football duration of practice time and equipment usage will be outlined in the 14 day Football Acclimatization guidelines.

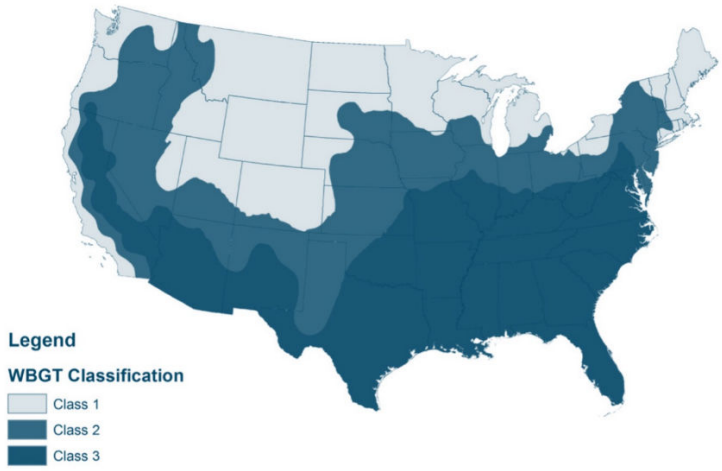
Wet Bulb Globe Temperature (WBGT) Policy

Wet Bulb Globe Temperatures (WBGT) guidelines dictate modifications in activity (work: rest ratios, hydration breaks, equipment worn, length of practice) at given WBGT temperatures to prevent Exertional Heat Stroke. The below table represents modified guidelines regarding:

1. The scheduling of practices at appropriate WBGT levels
2. The ratio of workout time to time allotted for rest and hydration at various WBGT levels.
3. The WBGT levels at which practice, and workout conditions should be terminated.
4. OSSAA member schools shall utilize WBGT to monitor practice and workout conditions and modify activity as outlined in the chart below:

WBGT Activity Guidelines

Region 2	Region 3	Activity Guidelines
< 79.7	< 82.0	Normal Activities – Provide at least 3 separate rest breaks each hour with a minimum duration of 3 min each during the activity.
79.7 – 84.6	82.0 – 86.9	Use discretion for intense prolonged exercise; Provide at least 3 separate rest breaks each hour with a minimum duration of 4 min each.
84.7 – 87.6	87.0 – 90.0	Maximum practice time is 2 hours. FOR FOOTBALL: Players are restricted to helmet, shoulder pads, and shorts during practice. If the WBGT rises to this level during practice, players may continue to work out wearing football pants without changing into shorts. FOR ALL SPORTS: Provide at least 4 separate rest breaks each hour with a minimum duration of 4 min each.
87.7 – 89.7	90.1 – 92.0	Maximum practice time is 1 hour. FOR FOOTBALL: No protective equipment may be worn during practice, and there may be no conditioning activities. FOR ALL SPORTS: There must be 20 min of rest breaks distributed throughout the hour of practice.
> 89.8	> 92.1	No outdoor activity. Delay activity until a cooler WBGT is reached.



WBGT Means and Methods of Measurement when practices are outside in WBGT of 82.0 or higher.

OSSAA member schools shall utilize a scientifically approved instrument that measures WBGT or other scientifically proven methods, such as an internet-based weather station software or application, to monitor the WBGT.

- Devices, internet-based weather stations, mobile applications
- Kestrel 5400
- Perry Weather, Earth Networks, or other onsite weather station services measuring WBGT.
- https://www.mesonet.org/weather/human-comfort/wet-bulb-globe-temperature-risk
- https://www.convergence.unc.edu/tools/wbgt
- Zelus WBGT (phone app)
- Heat Safety: Heat Index & WBGT (phone app)

If utilizing an on-site instrument, the instrument should be set up 30 minutes prior to practice and should be read 15 minutes prior to the start of practice.

If utilizing an internet-based application, the WBGT should also be checked at the 15-minute mark prior to practice. WBGT readings should be taken every 30 minutes during practice.

When there is a change in WBGT from one level to the next, responsible modifications to practice activities should be made based on the above WBGT Activity Guidelines.

It is required that schools record and keep on file the WBGT temperatures associated for outside practices.
This should be done before and during outside practices.

Practices are defined as the time that a participant engages in a coach/director-supervised, school-approved sport. “Practice” means the act of school personnel directly or indirectly giving individual or team instruction concerning fundamentals, conditioning activities, training, and workouts.

Practices are timed from when players report to the outside practice/workout area until the players leave the area.

Plans & Procedures for the Prevention of Exertional Heat Related Illness

Each member school's emergency action plan must include procedures to address exertional heat emergencies that include onsite rapid cooling using cold-water immersion or equivalent means.

Rapid cooling zones must be available for each outdoor athletic and marching band contest, practice, workout, or conditioning session that is held in WBGT of 82.0 degrees or higher. Rapid cooling zones are required to have immediate availability of cold-water immersion tubs or tarps that can be filled with ice and water and wrapped around individuals to rapidly cool internal body temperature (TACO method) and are encouraged to include a combination of the following options: ice sponges, towels, water misters, and shade. The presence of an employee or volunteer trained to administer cold-water immersion is recommended.

Coaches must adopt a heat injury prevention philosophy by always promoting unrestricted access to water and a student- athlete should never be denied access to water.

Rest breaks must involve unlimited hydration intake and rest without any activity involved.

For football, helmets should be removed during rest time.

Competitions & Modifications to Competitions

WBGT practice guidelines and limitations do not apply to OSSAA competitions, but it is recommended that schools monitor WBGT conditions prior to and during the competition and use appropriate recommendations for modifying these types of contests.

Any contest played in WBGT of 82.0 degrees or higher must always have a rapid cooling zone on site and available to allow for full body, rapid cooling of athletes experiencing exertional heat illness.

It is recommended that additional appropriate and responsible modifications to contests are made as needed to keep participants safe.

Modifications that potentially can be made include but are not limited to:

Football:

- If kick off WGBT is in the RED (90.1 – 91.9) – A mandatory hydration break should take place at approximately the 6-minute mark of each quarter until the WBGT level is ORANGE (87.1-90.0)

- The hydration break will last 3 minutes, and all players will remove their helmets and go to the sideline for a break. No coaches allowed on the field.

- **If kick off WBGT is in the** BLACK (>92.1) – A mandatory hydration break should take place at approximately the 4 and 8-minute mark of each quarter until WBGT levels fall into ORANGE (87.1-90.0) level.
- The hydration break will last 3 minutes, and all players will remove helmets and go to the sidelines. No coaches allowed on the field.

Cross Country:

- When in competition and the WBGT is in the RED (90.1-91.9) or BLACK (>92.1) at least 2 hydration stations should be placed on the racecourse as well as the finish line.

Fall Baseball / Fast Pitch Softball:

- When in competition and the WBGT is in the RED (90.1-91.9) or BLACK (>92.1), umpires and catchers should have a 3-minute hydration break starting in the bottom half of the second inning thru the rest of the contest or when the WBGT levels fall into ORANGE (87.1-90.0) level.