



Pickleball BC

AMBIENT AIR

CONDITION

POLICY



1. PURPOSE

This Policy shall outline practice guidelines for both recreational and tournament play during times and conditions when the ambient air quality is compromised by suspended particulate matter.

2. CONTEXT / BACKGROUND

The presence of smoke particulate or other air borne particulate presents a health hazard. The effect of such particulate varies All individuals are affected by such particular matter. Individuals with compromising health issues as well as both the youth and senior populations are more at risk when the air quality is reduced. The situation is exacerbated when individuals are engaged in any form of physical activity.

The British Columbia Government provides a monitoring (current values) and predictive service for many communities in BC. The information is reported as an Air Quality Health Index – AQHI. The methodology and science behind the AQHI values may be found on the website – [link here](#).

3. APPLICATION

This policy applies to all individuals, Clubs, sponsors and others participating in Pickleball BC programs, activities and events.

4. ROLES and RESPONSIBILITIES

It is the role of the Club or Tournament Director as the case may be, to monitor and take guidance from both the current AQHI and the forecast air AQHI when considering to continue or suspend planned pickleball activities.

Current and predicted values can be found on the BC Gov website – [link here](#). Current values are updated on an hourly basis, and show a time stamp.

Significant additional information may be found by browsing - search for BC air quality.

5. IMPLEMENTATION

Before and during any outdoor event, Clubs and Tournament Directors should be cognizant of predicted increases in the AQHI. One also needs to recognize that pickleball play frequently involves youth, elderly and 'at risk' individuals.

A plan should be drafted regarding at what point control measures be implemented (probably cessation of play), how to communicate such control to all affected players, including a Plan B – return to play.



The following chart has been copied directly from the BC Air Quality website.

The AQHI uses a scale to show the health risk associated with the air pollution we breathe.

The following table provides the health messages for 'at risk' individuals and the general public for each of the AQHI Health Risk Categories.

Health Risk	AQHI Index	Health Messages	
		At Risk Population ¹	General Population
Low	1 - 3	Enjoy your usual outdoor activities.	Ideal air quality for outdoor activities.
Moderate	4 - 6	Consider reducing or rescheduling strenuous activities outdoors if you are experiencing symptoms.	No need to modify your usual outdoor activities unless you experience symptoms such as coughing and throat irritation.
High	7 - 10	Reduce or reschedule strenuous activities outdoors. Children and the elderly should also take it easy.	Consider reducing or rescheduling strenuous activities outdoors if you experience symptoms such as coughing and throat irritation.
Very High	Above 10	Avoid strenuous activities outdoors. Children and the elderly should also avoid outdoor physical exertion.	Reduce or reschedule strenuous activities outdoors, especially if you experience symptoms such as coughing and throat irritation.

¹ People with heart or breathing problems are at greater risk. Follow your doctor's usual advice about exercising and managing your condition.

Source: Environment and Climate Change Canada

* If the AQHI index has increased to 7 (high health risk), it is usually because of high concentrations of smoke particles (PM2.5) in this community.



The following chart is based on information cited as sourced from the BC Air Quality website and/or the US based National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration data. Pickleball BC has not been able to verify those two citations but believes that the information is reasonably accurate.

Given that most people have cell phones with internet access this chart may be redundant.

Estimating AQHI equivalency based on visibility

Health Risk*1 per BC Air Q	Category*1 per NOAA	AQHI Equivalent	Visibility km
Low Risk	Good	1-3	15 +
Moderate Risk	Moderate	4 - 6	5 - 14
High Risk	Unhealthy	7 - 8	2.5 - 4
High Risk	Very Unhealthy	9 - 10	1.5 - 2
Very High Risk	Hazardous	10+	< 1.0

Note 1 -Different organization are using slightly different groups.

When estimating particulate matter concentrations visually, it is important to face away from the sun. Determine the limit of your visibility range by looking for landmarks at know distances. The visibility range is the point at which even high-contrast objects totally disappear. (Example: a dark building viewed against the sky at noon)

6. RESULTS

A thorough understanding of both the measurement metrics and the risks associated with higher AQHI values will result in a more conscious and responsible decision process with respect to outdoor pickleball play under adverse air quality conditions.

7. COMING INTO FORCE

This policy shall come into force 2023-09-10.