

ASSESSMENT OF SPORTS FIELDS

The City of Benicia manages 19 sports fields over 9 sites. These facilities are under enormous pressure from continual use. To ensure their playability and condition over the long term, some may be closed from time to time.

Wet Weather FAQ

Why are fields sometimes closed?

Fields may be closed because of wet weather, to undertake maintenance (e.g. end of season turfing), to undertake urgent repairs (e.g. repair broken irrigation or field damage from unauthorized use) or other works, including special events.

Why close fields when it rains?

Playing on fields that are wet causes major damage that can force fields to be closed for long periods of time. Closing wet fields prevents this damage and ensures that fields can be used more over the long term. Wet and damaged fields also present safety issues for participants. Safety is our #1 concern for users.

Why do some fields remain closed when it STOPS raining – even if the sun is out?

Some fields require many days of continuous fine weather to completely dry out. All fields have different characteristics, such as soil type and drainage capacity and recover from rain at different speeds. Some fields may feel dry but may still be wet underneath. For sports that use the infields and outfields, though the infields may look dry and usable, the outfield may pose safety issues and thus the field will be closed.

How does the City decide which fields are open and closed?

Decisions are based on inspections, weather conditions and field characteristics. Our staff members inspect fields to determine which are kept open and which are closed. If fields are closed, follow up inspections continue until all are opened.

Which fields are inspected?

Usually only our competition fields (also used for practices) are inspected when it rains. The neighborhood parks used for practices are not always inspected, but if athletic fields are closed, then the neighborhood parks are closed as well.

When are field inspections conducted?

During the week, inspections are conducted in the afternoon, usually by 2pm. We wait until the end of the day to assess fields, to allow for the best possible decision about usability. A field that is closed in the morning, may potentially be open by the afternoon. The earlier a decision is made about field status, the greater the chance that the field will be closed.

Why can't sports groups decide whether a field is open?

The City is best placed to inspect fields because it is responsible for managing risks associated with use of open space including ensuring fields are safe. Staff will consider the impact of closures equitably. City staff has the technical expertise to assess wet fields and can communicate in a timely way with all users. On occasion, the Recreation Supervisor will give the President of an organization the opportunity to make a decision regarding playability of the fields.

As a parent or participant, how can I find out if the fields are open for games/practices?

The Recreation Supervisor that oversees the allocation of fields for all users will contact the President of each sport user group, or the manager of any Adult Sport League, to let them know the status of the fields. The status is relayed to the President/Manager by 2pm Monday-Friday. Please contact your organization President, or your Team Manager to find out if games or practices will be cancelled. Please do not call the Parks and Community Services office.