

## **All Youth Sports Coaches & Assistants Coaches**

### **We Need Your Help!**

We believe that most organizations/ leagues have been doing their best over the past few years to keep people off of wet fields. They understand that excessive wear and tear is placed on a field and it's root structure if it is used during wet or rainy conditions.

Unfortunately, there are still some coaches who have not gotten the message or are just not listening. Many still believe that playing in poor weather conditions is 'part of the game'. We watch TV or attend games played in downpours or even in the snow. Unfortunately, not much thought is give to the 'torn up field' by coaches, players or spectators. It is just assumed that the field will be in good condition for the next practice/game. While this might be true at the professional or collegiate ranks, it is not the case at the youth level. We have limited financial and manpower resources. There are no work crews waiting on the sidelines to replace the damaged turf with new sod. On the contrary, once one of our town fields is damaged, it usually remains that way throughout the year. To make matters more difficult, our Fall seasons do not end until November and then we expect to get right back onto these same fields in the beginning of April. The window of opportunity to repair and grow new grass is almost non-existent once damage is done. According to leading turf specialist, the amount of wear and tear that an athletic field endures during wet weather is equivalent to FIVE TIMES that endured for dry weather play.

There is another reason, even more important, to stay off of wet fields. That being the safety and welfare of our young athletes. Certainly, children enjoy playing in the rain on a slippery, wet field. Simply put it is FUN to them. However, the possibility of injury increases dramatically whenever you have a slick ball and a slippery surface. It is our responsibility as adults to see that we minimize the risk of injury for our young players. Staying off a wet, slippery field is certainly one way of doing this.

We know that you all want your fields to be in good shape and your players safe, so do we. In order to accomplish this, we need 100% cooperation from your organization including all coaches, players and fans. Please support us this year and if you see someone 'forgetting' to adhere to our request, remind them of the damage they are doing and the risk they are placing on their players.

Also, be aware of the field that are and are NOT open to your particular league. A lot of work goes into scheduling to see that everyone is treated fairly and there are no arguments over use of fields by groups and individual coaches. Follow your scheduled use. Do NOT go on a field just because it is not being used. You must clear any 'extra' time either with the Rec or School Departments. Please help us with this.

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