



Friday, July 26, 2024

With just one week away from the Teesdale Summer Tournament, the Organizing Team would like to address the Air Quality Concerns that loom as our event dates approach.

With the fluctuating conditions we are currently experiencing in the Foothill County Area, the organizing team have been closely monitoring the Air Quality Index and upcoming forecast.

At this time, our plan to continue forward with our tournament schedule, with the following considerations in mind.

1. If conditions remain at AQHI 4+, join our officials, and monitor your horse closely.
2. Competitions will continue in the case of an AQHI of 6 and under.
3. If conditions reach AQHI 6/7, an Indoor Warm-Up will be instituted.
4. If conditions reach AQHI 8+ competitions will be temporarily postponed.
5. If conditions are forecast to hold steady at an AQHI of 8+ competition days may be postponed with a consolidated schedule or possibly cancelled

The team at Teesdale Equestrian Centre and Pacific Equine Sport thank you for your support of this Summer Tournament. We look forward to hosting you for this summer highlight, as we carefully adhere to the guidelines set forth by our National Federation.

Please feel free to contact our team via email, [info@teesdale.ca](mailto:info@teesdale.ca) , with any questions or concerns you may have. We thank you for your understanding and extend heartfelt condolences to those affected by these devastating wildfires.

## Understanding Air Quality Health Index messages

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

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



## Recommendations for Competition

Competitions are required to cancel or reschedule when the AQHI is at Very High (>10). EC sanctioning will be revoked for events that run during conditions of Very High AQHI. See EC's [Competition Administration Policy](#) for National Safety Standards.

The following chart is a modified version of the Environment and Climate Change Canada chart with recommendations for equine exercise and competition.

Risk	AQHI	Recommendations for Competition
Low	1-3	No need to change the competition format or timing.
Moderate	4-6	Competitors with high-risk equines* should monitor their equines closely and retire from competition if symptoms of respiratory distress occur.
High	7-10	Reduce exertional effort or reschedule strenuous activities when the AQHI is lower.
Very High	>10	Organizers are required to cancel or reschedule when the AQHI is at Very High (>10)

*\*High-risk equines include older and younger equines and equines with pre-existing respiratory conditions.*

Environmental temperature and high humidity should also be considered, as these factors will have an added negative effect on the respiratory system.

All competitors should be aware of the signs of respiratory distress and associated risks, especially those with high-risk equines. It is recommended that if competitions proceed when the AQHI is in the range of 4-9, additional announcements and warnings are made and posted. Competitors with equines in the high-risk equine population should continually monitor their equines for any signs of respiratory distress.

## Common Signs of Respiratory Distress

- Respiratory rate remaining over 30 breaths per minute at rest (normal rate is 12-20 per minute).
- Shortness of breath with possible wheezing sounds.
- Nostrils obviously flaring and anxious expression.
- Very labored breathing with exaggerated movement of chest wall and flanks.
- Possible repetitive, deep cough.
- Possible nasal discharge.

## References

- [Guidelines for Horses Exposed to Wildfire Smoke](#) – UC Davis Veterinary Medicine
- [Reference Guide: What Horse Owners Can Do To Monitor Horses Evacuated from Fire Areas](#) – UC Davis Veterinary Medicine