

Recreation and Parks Advisory Board
CUPF Updates
November 14, 2022

Use of portable lights on Athletic Fields has been a concern raised primarily by football user groups over the years. For more than two decades CUPF has worked with MCPS on managing exceptions to the longstanding practice of no portable lights being allowed on MCPS property. Often, exceptions have resulted in extensive damage to grassy areas and athletic fields due to vehicles being driven to haul portable lights on and off the property. Last year, MCPS staff committed to developing a written policy that could be used for the 2022-2023 school year.

This summer, CUPF reached out to MCPS for details and suggested that we meet with County Recreation, as well as Montgomery Parks in an effort to develop a single policy that may be used for all athletic fields countywide. Montgomery Parks had provided some excellent options for carry-on/carry-off light systems, among other strategies. It was determined that more public input was necessary before County Recreation and Montgomery Parks would be able to approve a policy due to community concerns surrounding light pollution in residential areas as well as concerns related to bird migratory patterns. MCPS determined to develop a new process requiring training for users, and a written exception agreement.

In September 2022 CUPF announced the revised process to the community. So far, the process seems to be well received. Please see the conditions of use below establishing the policy for lighting on MCPS and Recreation athletic fields.

Revised September 28, 2022

Conditions of Use Applicable to Montgomery County Public Schools Athletic Fields and Montgomery County Department of Recreation Athletic Fields

These Conditions of Use (COU) apply to use of all Applicable to Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) Athletic Fields and Montgomery County Department of Recreation (REC) Athletic Fields permitted by the Montgomery County Maryland Office of Community Use of Public Facilities (CUPF).

In accordance with the [Facility Use License Agreement \(FULA\)](#) the user must not proceed with the activity until the User has read and agreed to the Conditions of Use applicable to the requested facility.

1. Natural Grass Athletic Fields are closed from December 1 through March 14.
2. Natural Grass Athletic Fields will not be prepared or maintained for play at game standard prior to March 15.
3. No representations are made as to the condition of any ballfield prior to March 15.
4. Application of paint or markings strictly prohibited.
5. Proper athletic footwear must be worn at all times.
6. Press box, PA system and scoreboard are not available.

7. Goals are not guaranteed.
8. No exchanges of monies or collection of fees permitted onsite.
9. The use of portable lights on athletic fields or any other areas of the property is strictly prohibited.
 - A. To request an exception to this regulation as it relates to school property, please send organization name, address, point-of-contact, phone number, details of why an exception is being sought, and the school location(s) where permits have been issued for use via email to Gregory Kellner (gregory_kellner@mcpsmd.org) at MCPS.
 - i. This pertains to the use of portable lighting equipment after sunset for the purpose of projecting light onto school athletic fields, as long as the permitted use and use of the portable lights ends no later than 9:00 p.m.
 - B. If an exception is granted by MCPS, athletic field users must ensure that they have received a permit from Community Use of Public Facilities (CUPF) for all hours of athletic field use including hours after sunset.
10. Synthetic Turf fields can get hot on warm, sunny days. If you experience symptoms of a heat related illness, take appropriate action. During periods of excessive heat, vacate the field and alert the CUPF After-Hours Help Line at 240-490-CUPF (2873) that you are leaving.
11. All trash MUST be bagged and placed in the nearest trash/recycle cans. Any additional trash bags must be taken offsite for proper disposal/recycling.
12. Automobiles are strictly prohibited on sidewalks, curbs, grassy areas, playgrounds, walking/running tracks, athletic fields, outdoor basketball courts, tennis courts, paved play area pads, asphalt play area pads, or any areas other than those clearly designated for driving or parking.
13. Refer to the [Facility Use License Agreement \(FULA\)](#) for additional information.