

Note: To all involved with amateur combative sports. The following information regarding a proposed Emergency Rule is provided to gain other input. And medical documentation that illustrates risk caused by the proposed rule should forward it to: Patrishia.Blackstock@arkansas.gov or to asac@arkansas.gov

The Arkansas State Athletic Commission held a Special Meeting at 12:30pm on Tuesday 7/22/15 at The 5th Floor Conference Room located at the Arkansas Department of Health (4815 W. Markham). The Commission considered and then voted unanimously for Rule to reduce drastic weight cutting.

An emergency rule will become effective immediately upon filing as required by law, as the Commission believes immediate implementation is necessary as there is imminent peril to the public's health, safety and welfare.

Based on the 60 day study performed by the Arkansas State Athletic Commission and voluminous medical findings, amateur fighters are dehydrating themselves in order to "make weight."

- Of over 60 fighters who fought in Arkansas in January and February of this year, nearly fifty-percent (50%) had gained over 15 pounds between day-before weigh in and day-of weigh in.
- On July 18, 2015 in Fort Smith, AR, 30% of the card (or a total of 6) people were transported to the hospital. Dehydration was found in four of those and suspected in the other two.
- Late April, 2013- fighter dies in a sauna trying cut 33 pounds in a week for a mixed martial arts bout
- In January 2010, Arkansas professional fighter dies from complications of dehydration
- Renown neurosurgeon Dr. Van Lemons has recommended weight gain of no more than 7%.
- Association of American Ringside Physicians recommend only 5% weight gain.

The emergency rule is to be placed in Chapter 1 of the Rules and Regulations (published in April, 2014) and shall read:

Any Amateur Combative Sports fighter shall not gain more than .075 (7 & 1/2 %) of his advance weigh-in body weight, and in no case, shall any fighter be allowed to gain weight sufficient to move up more than ONE published weight class for his specific sport.

Example:

A day-before weigh in weight of 154 shall not gain more than 11.55 pounds. Any percentage over ½ pound (.51 pounds) shall be rounded up. In this example, the 154 lb fighter could gain a maximum of 12 pounds from day-before weigh in and day-of weigh in.



THE DANGERS OF CUTTING WEIGHT AND DEHYDRATING



For more information visit: www.associationofringsidephysicians.org

Unhealthy and dangerous weight loss practices continue to be a serious problem in combat sports. One recent study found that 39% of MMA fighters were entering competition in a dehydrated state. Heat illness and death in athletes have already happened in the sports of wrestling, boxing and MMA. It's been shown that excessive weight loss, rapid weight loss, and repeated cycling of weight gain/loss causes decreased performance, hormonal imbalance, decreased nutrition, and increased injury risk. Other life-threatening problems associated with improper weight loss and dehydration includes:

- **Decreased Muscle Strength & Endurance:** decreased blood flow to muscles makes them work less well
- **Decreased Heart & Cardiovascular Function:** the heart works harder and *less* efficiently
- **Reduced Energy Utilization, Nutrient Exchange & Acidosis:** with decreased blood flow to tissues, nutrients don't get delivered, and the body's waste products do not get removed as well. A buildup of acid occurs which changes cells' functions in the body
- **Heat Illness:** this takes on 4 forms: heat cramps, heat syncope (loss of consciousness), heat exhaustion, and heat stroke(which may be fatal).
- **Decreased Kidney Functions:** dehydration leads to decreased kidney blood flow & decreased kidney function.
- **Electrolyte Problems:** decreased kidney function results in imbalances of electrolytes such as unhealthy increases in potassium & sodium.
- **Mood Swings & Mental Changes:** dehydration contributes to increased mood swings, poor concentration & focus, disorientation& other mental changes
- **Eye Trouble:** dehydration can cause blurred vision & dry eyes
- **Increased Risk of Brain Injury:** there are likely increased risks of brain bleeding & concussion

DON'T:

- Don't use extreme methods for making weight such as excessive heat methods (rubberized suits, steam rooms, saunas), excessive intense bouts of exercise, vomiting, laxatives & diuretics.
- Don't use dehydration as a mainstay of making weight. It puts you at risk of improper rehydration techniques-when in reality; proper re-hydration takes several hours to days. (Many cases of IV fluids being used for rehydration after weigh-ins have been reported-this is a doping violation with several organizations)

DO:

- Commit to year-round proper diet & training for proper weight control & body composition
- Maintain your weight year round near an appropriate competition weight & don't compete in a weight class outside your appropriate weight class
- Maintain a good state of hydration by drinking fluid throughout the day & staying hydrated during workouts