

City of Seaside SOP #78
Park & Playground Inspection & Maintenance Policy

I. PURPOSE

City recognizes the importance of maintaining the condition, accessibility and safety of its parks, playgrounds and recreational facilities. The purpose of this policy is to outline the process by which city parks, playgrounds and recreational facilities are inspected and maintained. The focus of this policy is to protect life and property through regular inspection and timely maintenance. A comprehensive inspection and maintenance program of parks, playgrounds, and recreational facilities is necessary to effectively manage risk and mitigate the potential for injury.

II. SCOPE

This policy applies to all parks, playgrounds, and recreational facilities owned by the City.

III. DEFINITIONS

- A. **Audit:** The initial, state required, thorough inspection of a playground performed by a Certified Playground Safety Inspector (CPSI). Audits must be completed for new installations or equipment replacement/renovation prior to use by the public.
- B. **Certified Playground Safety Inspector (CPSI):** A person who is certified by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) as having the skills and professional knowledge to implement a sound accident prevention and risk management program through playground audits and inspection program design and implementation.
- C. **High Frequency Inspection:** One element of a comprehensive park and playground inspection program. High frequency inspections typically occur at locations with a high level of use, and should be performed frequently enough to identify and correct typical hazards.
- D. **Low Frequency Inspection:** One element of a comprehensive park and playground inspection program. Low frequency inspections occur at all park and playground locations owned by the city, and should be performed frequently enough to identify and correct less obvious hazards that occur over time due to wear and tear, abuse, or inadequate maintenance.
- E. **Standard of Care:** The degree of care an ordinary, reasonable, prudent person would exercise in given circumstances. The State of California has adopted the Consumer Product Safety Commission's *Handbook for Public Playground Safety* as the standard of care for the selection, placement,

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installation, inspection and maintenance of public playground equipment. The Standard of Care also pertains to inspection of park, open space, sports fields, and facilities.

IV. COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENTS

All parks, playgrounds, sports fields, open space, and recreational facilities owned by the city shall be operated and maintained in accordance with federal, state and local law and regulations, as well as the various provisions of this policy. This includes compliance with the most recent version of the Consumer Products Safety Commission (CPSC) *Handbook for Playground Safety*, the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) F1487: *Standard Consumer Safety Performance Specification for Playground Equipment for Public Use*, and ASTM F1292: *Standard Specification for Impact Attenuation of Surface Systems Under and Around Playground Equipment*.

V. INSPECTIONS

- A. Regular inspections will be conducted to proactively identify and correct deficiencies before an incident occurs. Inspectors shall move throughout facilities, amenities and surrounding areas, conducting visual and physical inspections of every component and surface. No area shall just be assumed to be "OK."
- B. All parks and playgrounds shall be periodically assessed, and a decision made regarding whether high or low frequency inspections (or both), are needed. Factors to be taken into account include level of use, condition of equipment, location, and surrounding environment. However, inspection frequency shall never fall below manufacturer's recommendations or the recognized standard of care.
- C. Inspections shall be documented using the Playsafe web based software for play structures and deficiencies will be documented with digital photographs that include the location of the deficiency.
- D. Identified deficiencies that are considered routine (i.e. tightening bolts, lubricating parts) shall be documented and addressed immediately.
- E. Deficiencies that cannot be addressed immediately shall be documented and addressed as soon as possible. Until the deficiency can be addressed, the affected area or piece of equipment shall be closed to the public and signage shall be placed warning of any identified hazard. Whenever a hazard warning is placed, a photograph shall be taken and retained. All hazard warnings shall be inspected daily, at a minimum, until the deficiency has been corrected.

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VI. PLAYGROUND AUDITS

- A. A full and thorough audit of any newly installed or renovated playground equipment shall be performed by a Certified Playground Safety Inspector (CPSI).
- B. Playground audits shall NOT be conducted by employees or agents of the manufacturer or installer.

VII. DOCUMENTATION

- A. All inspections shall be documented using the Playsafe web based software and shall contain the date and time of the inspection, the name of the individual completing the inspection, and any identified deficiencies. Once any identified deficiencies are addressed, this shall be entered into the database.
- B. All checklists/maintenance records shall be retained in accordance with the city's record retention policy, but in no case less than three (3) years from date of completion.
- C. Playground audits shall be retained in accordance with the city's record retention policy, but in no case shall playground audits be disposed of while the equipment is still in use.

VIII. INCIDENT INVESTIGATION

- A. All complaints regarding condition, accessibility, or safety of agency-owned parks, playgrounds or recreational facilities shall be taken seriously and addressed as soon as possible. Records should be generated and maintained for all complaints, subsequent inspections and corrective actions.
- B. If an incident occurs resulting in bodily injury or property damage, the Deputy City Manager – Administrative Services shall be notified immediately and an investigation into the alleged incident shall be undertaken. Digital photos of the incident location and any equipment alleged to be defective shall be obtained, as well as contact information for any injured party and any witnesses, and their version(s) of events that resulted in the incident shall be documented.
- C. If any equipment fails, or is alleged to have failed, such equipment shall be retained in a safe place and clearly labeled that it should be retained. Defective equipment involved in an incident shall NOT be disposed of

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under any circumstance until any resulting claims/lawsuits have been resolved.

REFERENCES

- I. *Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), Handbook for Playground Safety*
- II. *ASTM F1292: Standard Specification for Impact Attenuation of Surface Systems Under and Around Playground Equipment*
- III. *ASTM F1487: Standard Consumer Safety performance Specification for Playground Equipment for Public Use*
- IV. *ASTM 2223-04: Standard Guide for ASTM Standards on Playground Surfacing*