

Playground Inspection General Information

HELPFUL INFORMATION TO PRESENT TO AN HOA BOARD:

- It is not a law in the state of Indiana to inspect a playground. However, it is a law in California and many states have thus far adopted the written standards as guidelines to follow for their states.
- What are those standards? Playground equipment manufacturers must meet ASTM- 17 (American Standard of Testing Materials) and the CPSC (Consumer Product Safety Commission) standard. These are the standards that are always present in a court of law when dealing with playgrounds.
- A home owner's association owned playground is defined in the ASTM as a public because it is allowing multiple users, therefore it is subject to these standards.
- Most government entities such as city parks, state parks, and schools already follow these standards and employ in house CPSI's to inspect the playgrounds. Your local elementary school, for example, is most likely inspected by the districts CPSI. A couple of local property management companies here in the Indianapolis area already have 3rd party CPSI's to inspect their properties playgrounds.
- Because a playground is new does not mean that it is maintenance free or does not need to be inspected. **Filling the surface to the appropriate depth every year does not constitute a safe playground.** We have found that is becoming quite a common practice for HOA playgrounds to be left alone after installation, causing greater repair and replacement costs down the road.
- When a child for whatever reason becomes severely injured on a playground, and legal action is sought, the first thing that happens is an outside inspection takes place. If the playground equipment or surface is found to be non-compliant and or has no records, documentation, maintenance, or regular inspection of the equipment, the owner may be on the hook for negligence. An HOA is less liable if there is a plan in place to fix something rather than no plan at all.
- In some instances, playground inspection may lower insurance rates with the HOA's carrier making the inspection worth it.

WHAT HAPPENS DURING THE INSPECTION?

1. Collect as much history, manufacturer data as possible to assist the owner of playground
2. Inspect the surface
3. Inspect the surrounding area
4. Inspect the equipment
5. Look for level one - five hazards present such as entanglements, protrusions, crush or shear hazards
6. We have set of probes and gauges to measure those hazards
7. We follow a 100 plus point check list for each piece of the playground that applies
8. Depending upon what is found, a report with visuals, and recommended repairs or suggested maintenance is sent to property manager and a HOA can decide what can be repaired. It is very much like a home inspection report.

WHAT DOES THE QUOTED PRICE INCLUDE?

1. Includes a high-level check list of each piece of equipment to check for compliance to ASTM-17 standard and CPSC standard
2. Surfacing depth compliance
3. List of non-compliant equipment, recommended repairs, replacements, or removal.
4. Printed report for documentation with proves due diligence and compliance if injury or lawsuit may occur.

