

Protecting Our Parishes, Missions, and Schools

Maintenance Checklist, Inspecting the Playground

On the first playground series we reviewed the supervisor checklist, in which the individual supervising the children on the playground must use to determine if appropriate or not to let the children play.

In this issue the focus is given to the maintenance inspections which should be carried out in an orderly method by personnel familiar with the playground.

All playgrounds present some challenge and children can be expected to use equipment in unintended and unanticipated ways. It is important to have adequate maintenance and inspection of the playground equipment to prevent, avoid and/or minimize injuries.



Maintenance Inspections

All playground areas and equipment should be inspected for extreme wear and tear, and any potential hazards. Regularly used playgrounds will need more frequent maintenance and inspections.

A complete maintenance program should be developed for each playground with the use of a checklist. The checklist can be used to make sure that inspections are in compliance with the manufacturer's specifications. Comprehensive inspections should give particular attention to moving parts and those parts expected to wear.

Let's take a look at some of the items to consider when inspecting the playground equipment.

Surfacing

- Protective surfacing under and around the equipment should be adequate.
- Surfacing materials have not deteriorated.
- Loose-fill surfacing materials have no foreign objects or debris.
- Loose-fill surfacing materials are not compacted.
- Loose-fill surfacing materials have not been displaced under heavy use areas such as under swings or at slide exits.



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Drainage

- The entire play area has satisfactory drainage, especially in heavy use areas such as under swings and at slide exits.

General Hazards

- There are no sharp points, corners or edges on the equipment.
- There are no missing or damaged protective caps or pugs.
- There are no hazardous protrusions
- There are no potential clothing entanglement hazards, such as open S-hooks or protruding bolts.
- There are no crush and shearing points on exposed moving parts.
- There are no trip hazards, such as exposed footings or anchoring devices and rocks, roots, or any other obstacles in the play/use zone.

Security of Hardware

- There are no loose fastening devices or worn connections.
- Moving parts, such as swing hangers, merry-go around bearings, and track rides, are not worn.

Durability of Equipment

- All equipment is securely anchored.
- There is no rust, rot, cracks, or splinters on any equipment (check carefully where it comes in contact with the ground).
- There are no broken or missing components on the equipment (e.g., handrails, guardrails, protective barriers, steps, or rungs).
- There are no damaged fences, benches, or signs on the playground.

General Upkeep of Playgrounds

- There are no user modifications to the equipment, such as strings and ropes tied to equipment, swings looped over top rails, etc.
- The playground is free from debris or litter such as tree branches, soda cans, bottles, glass, etc.
- There are no missing trash receptacles.
- Trash receptacles are not full.

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Playground Maintenance Inspection Checklist

SAFE	UNSAFE	Surfacing
		Protective surfacing under and around the equipment is adequate
		Surfacing materials have not deteriorated.
		Loose-fill surfacing materials have no foreign objects or debris.
		Loose-fill surfacing materials are not compacted.
		Loose-fill surfacing materials have not been displaced under heavy use areas such as under swings or at slide exits.
SAFE	UNSAFE	Drainage
		The entire play area has satisfactory drainage, especially in heavy use areas such as under swings and at slide exits.
SAFE	UNSAFE	General Hazards
		There are no sharp points, corners or edges on the Equipment.
		There are no missing or damaged protective caps or Plugs.
		There are no hazardous protrusions.
		There are no potential clothing entanglement hazards such as open S-hooks or protruding bolts.
		There are no crush and shearing points on exposed moving parts.
		There are no trip hazards, such as exposed footings or anchoring devices and rocks, roots, or any other obstacles in the play/use zone.
SAFE	UNSAFE	Security of Hardware
		There are no loose fastening devices or worn connections.
		Moving parts, such as swing hangers, merry-ground bearings, and track rides, are not worn.
SAFE	UNSAFE	Durability of Equipment
		All equipment is securely anchored.
		There is no rust, rot, cracks, or splinters on equipment (check where it comes in contact with the ground).
		There are no damaged fences, benches, or signs on the playground.
		There are no broken or missing components on the equipment (e.g., handrails, guardrails, protective barriers, steps, or rungs).
SAFE	UNSAFE	General Upkeep of Playgrounds
		The entire playground is free from debris or litter such as tree branches, soda cans, bottles, glass, etc.
		There are no missing trash receptacles.
		Trash receptacles are not full.
		There are no user modifications to the equipment, such as strings and ropes tied to equipment, swings looped over top rails, etc.

Signature of person completing the inspection: _____

Name of person completing the inspection: _____

Date inspection completed: _____

Inspection reviewed by: _____

School Name: _____

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