

Kids Play Safe written testimony

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There are over 200,000 playground related injuries each year according to the CPSC serious enough for emergency room treatment. While around 40% of these are due to misuse and improper supervision, another 40% of the injuries are due to lack of playground maintenance according to NRPA.

There has been a program for playground safety through NRPA for over 20 years now creating Certified Playground Safety Inspectors.

While CPSC publication 325 and ASTM1487 are only guidelines and standards, many states have adopted them into law where applicable (childcare facilities licensing for instance).

2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design is a federal law and there is a section that deals exclusively with playground areas. Which also refers to ASTM standards making them part of the law.

The municipal budgets have continued to grow for creating new playground spaces. The quality of products and installations have advanced dramatically in the last decade. The advancement for inspections and maintenance of these new playground areas has stalled or moved in reverse over recent years due to lack of qualified individuals, budgets, and no mandates on providing the services within each agency.

We need a bill to be passed that accomplishes several key things.

- 1) Recognition of CPSC325, ASTM1487, and ASTM1292 as governing documents for playground safety and inspection.
- 2) Mandate for minimum playground inspection requirements including documentation (bi-annually).
- 3) Mandate for minimum written plan to make corrective actions for any hazards identified during the inspection process.

All 3 of these things are required and cannot happen without them all happening together. The liability exposure for an agency not to follow through with the corrective action after it has been identified and written up in a plan would be to great. Therefor there doesn't need to be any mandate any further.

This would help to ensure a reduction in major injuries on public playgrounds in our state. It would also increase the longevity of the playground lifespan which ultimately saves the taxpayers money on unneeded playground replacement projects.

General knowledge – the average Commercial Playground project is now \$80,000 to \$150,000 with more and more exceeding \$500,000 in certain park districts. The lifespan of these projects should be 15-20+ years if maintained properly. If not inspected and maintained regularly this lifespan can drop in half!