

TEMPORARY INFLATABLE AMUSEMENT STRUCTURE

Background:

Schools use Temporary Inflatable Amusement Structure, such as bouncy castles, blow up slides and other inflatable play structures, as part of fun day activities. There are certain elevated risks associated with these temporary inflatable amusement Structures which schools need to address prior to allowing their use during school activities. Injury risks increase when they are misused, operated without adequate adult supervision or used in adverse weather conditions.

Procedures:

School Principals are responsible for ensuring the procedures below are followed when a Temporary Inflatable Amusement Structure is operated at their school or at an off-site activity. Questions regarding this Administrative Procedure shall be directed to the Occupational Health and Safety Officer.

1. Advance Planning

- a. In Alberta, the owners of Structures operating at private events or places where access is restricted to invited guests of the organizer (school events), no certifications or inspections are required.
- b. Schools must only work with companies which are fully insured and can provide a Certificate of Insurance in the amount of \$2 million and names Medicine Hat Catholic Board of Education as an additional insured.
- c. Schools should have the inflatable Structure operator staff the event with trained personnel. However, there may be occasions when the school will be handling the setup and/or supervision of an inflatable amusement Structure. In those situations, it is extremely important to obtain written instructions from the operator or the manufacturer about the safe set-up and operation of the equipment and to ensure that all staff/volunteers receive proper training for the duties they will perform.
- d. Schools shall consult with the Facilities and Operations Supervisor in the planning stage to consider impacts or underground utilities and irrigation lines or for other impacts. Damage as a result of set up may be charged back to the school.
- e. Have parents sign an appropriate informed consent form to allow their children to use the apparatus. The consent may be obtained as part of the annual consent form completed by parents, The consent must address the following:



- i. Use of Temporary Inflatable Amusement Structures, such as Bouncy Castles, involves certain elements of risk. Injuries may occur while participating in these activities. The following list includes, but is not limited to, examples of the types of injury which may result from using Temporary Inflatable Amusement Structures:
 - 1. Fractures and Sprains;
 - 2. Injury of neck and head including concussion, facial injury and damage to teeth; and,
 - 3. Death
 - ii. The risk of sustaining these types of injuries result from the nature of the activity and can occur without any fault of either the student, or the school board, its' employees/agents or the facility where the activity is taking place. By choosing to take part in this activity, you are accepting the risk that your child may be injured.
 - iii. The chance of an injury occurring can be reduced by carefully following instructions at all times while engaged in the activity.
- f. This Administrative Procedure would apply to set up on school facilities or off-site. If off-site, please consult with the property owner regarding underground utilities, irrigation, and other rules or permits needed.

2. Safe Set-up

- a. Situate the inflatable Structure away from tree branches, fences, walls and overhead cables
- b. Make sure that the selected site has adequate space for anchorage
- c. Check that the inflatable fabric or material is flame resistant
- d. Clear the grounds of large stones and sharp objects, and/or place an appropriate tarp on the ground to protect the bottom of the unit
- e. Set-up/position the anchoring system and mechanical equipment so that they will not trip anyone entering or exiting the Structure. Securely anchor the Structure to prevent displacement by wind or user activity.
- f. Check to make sure power cords are in good repair. Plug the blower into a GFCI (ground fault circuit interrupter).
- g. Ensure the generator is CSA approved and that wires are properly secured in order to avoid a tripping hazard
- h. Make sure that the inflatable Structure is fully inflated and not sagging
- i. Check for rips or tears when the Structure is fully inflated



- j. Make sure that the operating area is clear of onlookers, so that the operator(s) will have a clear view of the jumping surface and of users mounting and dismounting the inflatable
- k. Cover hard surfaces adjacent to the inflatable's open sides and entrances/exits with non-inflatable mats (e.g. gym mats) to a depth of at least 1.2 metres (4 feet)
- l. Ensure all warning signs are in place and clearly visible.
- m. Ensure that the unintended deflation of the air-supported structure due to power failure (either electrical or internal combustion generators) will not present a risk of injury to anyone on or inside the Structure. All persons using the Structure shall be immediately removed in the event of an unintended deflation.
- n. Ensure internal combustion engines (generators) are located away from the air supported enclosure to prevent buildup of carbon monoxide inside the enclosure.

3. Safe Operation

- a. Appoint at least one adult, preferably two - to supervise children at all times when they are on an inflatable Structure. Always follow the safety instructions from the manufacturer regarding the use of supervisors.
- b. Make sure that operators/attendants are familiar with, and have access to the safety rules, on what users are not permitted to do in or on the Structure.
- c. Ensure that the Structure is supervised while in use. Supervisors should be checking that the maximum capacity of the Structure is not exceeded and that the users of the Structure meet manufacturer's height /size criteria. Also, ensure operation of the Structure is terminated if winds exceed maximum stated by Structure manufacturer.
- d. Do not exceed manufacturer's specifications for the capacity of the inflatable
- e. Make sure that students remove shoes, loose-fitting clothing, jewelry and other personal items before using the Structure
- f. Do not allow students to take food, drink or sharp objects onto an inflatable amusement Structure
- g. Do not allow students to attempt any kind of stunt — e.g. somersaults or wrestling — on an inflatable amusement Structure
- h. Make sure that only children of approximately the same size are permitted to play on an inflatable structure at the same time
- i. Do not allow students to sit or lie down on an inflatable's jumping surface while others are bouncing around them
- j. If the Structure has an inflatable slide, make sure that only one student at a time is using it



- k. Ensure that the inflatable is properly anchored and secured to the tether points in accordance with the manufacturer's guidelines
- l. If an inflatable unit deflates, remove occupants immediately
- m. Do not leave the structure inflated when not in use or overnight and ensure that unauthorized inflation cannot occur.

4. Weather

- a. Inflatable amusement Structure shall not be used in rainstorms or high winds. Rain can make the jumping surface dangerously slick, and muddy conditions may impair the anchoring system. Strong winds can uproot inflatables and tip them over. In some cases, gusts of wind have even torn bouncy castles loose from their anchors and lifted them into the air with children inside. Discontinue use of an inflatable amusement Structure in the event of winds in excess of 24 kilometres per hour (15 mph).

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