CANADIAN ASSOCIATION OF PLAYGROUND PRACTITIONERS

L'ASSOCIATION CANADIENNE DES RESPONSABLES D'AIRES DE JEU POUR ENFANTS

CAPP, "BEST PRACTICE" Tip Sheet

Note: This Best Practice [A] Tip Sheet is simply being presented by our Association as a reference tool/guide to strengthen and support the ongoing risk-management programs of today's owner/operators and playground practitioners. It is not intended to present further requirements or measures of performance for owner/operators, manufacturers, or suppliers of Children's Playspaces and Equipment.

Reference: A playspace owner/operator must always consider the technical and dimensional requirements of the CSA-Z614 National Standard of Canada for Children's Playspaces and Equipment published version, applicable to the relevant date of purchase/installation of their playspace [B], as their minimum level of best-practice or due-diligence in any/all applications of the Standard's criteria.

Disclaimer: The following commentary has been published and reviewed by all members of CAPP, and is supported as acceptable and reasonable professional-judgement only.
It is the responsibility of users of this information to judge it's suitability for their particular purpose, as the Canadian Association of Playground Practitioners does not warrant the suitability of this information to any particular purpose. This best practice does not purport to address all of the safety concerns, if any, associated with its use. It is the responsibility of the user of this best practice to establish appropriate safety and health practices and determine the applicability of regulatory requirements prior to use.

CAPP-BP-01A (March 2011)

Grandfathering of Standard Requirements

Question: Why would any aspect of a dimensional, technical, or intentional "requirement" or "performance standard" change over a period of time?

Answer: The original standard writing organizations [C] deem that new information, statistical data, or simple editorial improvements are worthy of change to improve/enhance, or even remove, the aspect's original intent.

Relevant Issue Commentary / Discussion Points:

- √ An owner/operator, or 3rd party inspector, must be aware that the degree of warranty and liability of the original manufacturer and/or supplier can only be limited to the published standard at the time of installation.[D]
- √ An aspect to consider relative to the potential grandfathered issue-acceptance is the degree of burden placed on the owner/operator relative to the difficulty to update or replace the changed issue.[E]
- √ Owner/operators have a proprietary, and ultimately legal due-diligence [F] obligation to recognise the importances of any/all compliance-requirement changes over time.
- √ When applicable, a knowledgeable Playground Practitioner must also present compliance-requirement changes or updates [G] forward in a professional manner, with the intent only to improve an owner/operator's awareness and effective hazard-risk management program.
- √ It is important to remember that the CSA-Z614 Standard is a living document. Since first published as a Guideline in 1990, many changes have been made to both increase and relax dimensional and technical requirements over the years. Notable examples of which are included at the end of this document.[H]

Continued,

Clarifying Appendix Notes:

A Definition (Wikipedia):

Best Practice: A best practice is a technique, method, process, activity, incentive, or reward which conventional wisdom regards as more effective at delivering a particular outcome than any other technique, method, process, etc. when applied to a particular condition or circumstance. The idea is that with proper processes, checks, and testing, a desired outcome can be delivered with fewer problems and unforeseen complications. Best practices can also be defined as the most efficient (least amount of effort) and effective (best results) way of accomplishing a task, based on repeatable procedures that have proven themselves over time for large numbers of people.

B Clarification Point:

CSA-Z614-07, Clause 1.4 reads:
This Standard applies to
(a) public-use playspaces built, protective surfacing installed, and public-use playground equipment manufactured after the date of publication of this edition; and
(b) additions to, and replacement parts for, public-use playspaces installed after the date of publication of this edition.

C Clarification Point:

The Technical Committee on Children's Playspaces and Equipment prepares the CSA-Z614 National Standard. CSA Standards are subject to periodic review, and suggestions for their improvement will be referred to the appropriate committee.

D Clarification Point:

That is to say that the original manufacturer/supplier cannot and should not be expected to foresee changes to the Standard that will negatively affect their product or service. Conversely, it is also considered reasonable and professional-practice that any/all manufacturers/suppliers of play equipment and surfaces be knowledgeable in their field and aware of changes/updates affecting their product at all times (ie: ignorance is a poor excuse).

E Clarification Example:

An example of this acceptance is presented within the CSA-Z614-07 Standard as the fall-height limits of elevated play-platforms was significantly increased (clause 15.16.1) within that 2007 version. However as this fall-height increase has a significant effect on the impact-performance level of the protective surfacing element, it was deemed reasonable to accept that pass-fail site testing shall be conducted from the fall height determined in accordance with the edition of the Standard in effect at the time of installation (clause 10.4.5).

F Definition (Wikipedia):

Due diligence: Is the level of judgment, care, prudence, determination, and activity that a person would reasonably be expected to do under particular circumstances.

G Examples:

Provide reference dates as to the date of publication for a requirement change.
(*ie: when was the particular CSA-Z614 Standard compliance requirement first published*)

Include a hazard-rating reference to each compliance issue noted to assist an owner/operator to recognise the timing and need for repairs, retrofits, or replacement updates to be completed.

Continued,

Examples:

Notable examples of changes/updates found within the CAN/CSA-Z614 National Standard of Canada, over time include, but are not limited to:

- June 1990 – CAN/CSA-Z614-M90 first published as a Guideline only
- May 1998 – CAN/CSA-Z614-98 recognised as a National "Standard" of Canada
- May 1998 – updated to include impact-testing of protective surfacing
- May 1998 – updated to include entanglement testing within areas of uncontrolled motion
- May 1998 – updated to increase requirements for elevated platform guard rail applications
- May 1998 – updated to increase requirements for elevated platform barrier rail applications
- May 1998 – updated to include dimensional requirements for all access components (table 3)
- May 1998 – updated to include no-encroachment zones for swings, slides, rotating equipment
- May 1998 – updated to include dimensional requirements for slide entrance enclosure systems
- May 1998 – updated to increase dimensional requirements for upper-body equipment (height, grasp, reach)
- August 2000 – clarification update for slide entrance enclosure systems
- June 2003 – updated to include a 2% allowance for all dimensional measurements
- June 2003 – surfacing material chart for recommended depth references removed
- June 2003 – updated staircase railing dimensions
- June 2003 – barrier railings to no longer allow the passage of torso probe between platform and lower edge
- June 2003 – playspace layout allowance included for perimeter ramp/bridge access for accessibility
- June 2003 – updated to include requirements for playstructure labelling and playspace signage
- August 2004 – editorial update for staircase handrail dimensions (to include the word "approximate")
- March 2007 – surfacing material chart for recommended depth references re-introduced
- March 2007 – clarification update to confirm entanglement test device shall be raised when testing
- March 2007 – fall height limits for elevated play platforms increased
- March 2007 – freestanding arched climbers restricted for use by the 5-12 year age group only
- March 2007 – update to require barrier style railings on all stairs greater than 1200mm high
- March 2007 – allowance included for barrier railing openings with variable dimensional widths (width measured in upper 3rd only)
- March 2007 – protective surfacing zone for standing spring riders may be shared
- March 2007 – significant update to include dimensional and layout requirements for multi-user to-fro swings
- March 2007 – clarification of fall height requirements for spatial net climbers (lowered to highest standing surfaces versus highest point)
- March 2007 – removal of no-encroachment zone requirement for swings under 2.4m high (small children's fenced playspace with enclosed seats)
- March 2007 – removal of no-encroachment zone requirement for slides under 1200mm high
- March 2007 – Annex H – Guidelines for accessibility in playgrounds presented in mandatory language

Case-Point Scenario:

A composite playstructure is installed in 2001 and is designed and built to the requirements of 1998 for the 5 to 12 year user age group. It includes a staircase system to access a 1200mm (48") high-elevated play platform. The staircase railing system includes 2 open handrails each side. The top edge of the lower rail measures 450mm (17.75in) and the upper rail measures 850mm (33.5in) above the front edge of a step.

A) Handrailing system is measured as compliant to the 1998 version (clause 13.1.4.5)
B) Handrailing system is measured again as non-compliant to the June 2003 version (clause 13.1.4.1)
C) Handrailing system is considered close however still non-compliant to the Aug 2004 addendum (clause 13.1.4.1)
D) Handrailing system is measured again as compliant to the March 2007 version (clause 13.1.4.1)