Safe Kids Canada

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Playground Inspection
Frequently Asked Questions

- How can I find a playground inspector?
- What should I consider when hiring a playground safety inspector?
- What does a playground inspection cost?

How can I find a playground inspector?
There are several programs in Canada to certify playground inspectors. These programs can help connect you with trained professionals who may be available to inspect your playground and provide advice on how to improve its safety.

- The **Canadian Parks and Recreation Association (CPRA)** provides a Canadian Certified Playground Inspector Certification program to individuals who successfully complete the Theory and Practical training courses through the **Canadian Playground Safety Institute (CPSI)**.
  Contact: Canadian Parks and Recreation Association
  404-2197 Riverside Drive
  Ottawa, Ontario K1H 7X3
  Tel: (613) 523-5315
  Fax: (613) 523-1182
  E-mail: cpsi@cpra.ca
  Web: www.cpra.ca

- **Ontario Parks Association** also trains playground inspectors. Most people trained under this program are based in Ontario.
  Contact: Ontario Parks Association
  627 Main Street East
  Hamilton, Ontario L8M 1J5
  Tel: (905) 524-3535 or (outside Ontario) 1-866-560-7783
  Fax: (905) 524-3883
  Web: www.opassoc.on.ca

- In **Québec**, playground inspector training is available through the **Institut National de Santé Publique du Québec (INSPQ)**. Several organizations whose members have received this training provide listings of certified playground safety inspectors:

  L'Association des architectes paysagistes du Québec (AAPQ) (Landscape Architects Association of Quebec)
  Web: http://www.aapq.org

  (Click "association", then "Liste des membres accrédités pour la certification des aires extérieures et équipements de jeu des Centres de Petite Enfance et des Garderies du Québec.)

- **L'Ordre des technologues professionnels du Québec** (The Society of Professional Technologists of Quebec)
  http://www.otpq.qc.ca/pdf/liste-giasson-internet.pdf

  Owners/operators such as daycares can also contact other organizations in their field to get referrals to playground inspectors that were found to be helpful and professional. Those looking for referrals could ask questions like: did the inspector submit his or her report on time? Did the inspector take photographs of any issues identified? Did he or she answer the client's questions and allow the client to watch as the inspection took place? And finally, did the inspector help the client prioritize repairs?

What should I consider when hiring a playground safety inspector?
When contacting potential playground inspectors, be prepared to ask some questions to ensure that you are hiring a qualified and knowledgeable professional to properly assess your playground. Here are some important points to consider:

- They should be able to provide proof of current Playground Safety Inspector Certification issued by a credible organization, such as the Canadian Parks and Recreation Association (CPRA) or Ontario Parks Association, Institut National de Santé Publique du Québec (INSPQ).
- They should have a solid, technical understanding of the most current CSA Standard for Children's Playspaces and Equipment.
- They should be able to assess the risk of potential injury using the various surfacing performance testing devices and other playground equipment testing instruments described in the CSA Standard.
- They should be able to provide a list of references.
- They should not be in a conflict of interest with any manufacturers, suppliers and/or other contractors that are involved with the equipment and surfacing in your playground.

What does a playground inspection cost?
The cost of a professional playground inspection will depend on many factors - including the size and age of playground, location, requirements from the playground operator's insurer, and the experience and credentials of the inspector. Inspection costs range generally from around $250 to $600. A typical inspection might be $350 plus another $50 to $150 for surface impact testing at the same time.
If you need surface impact testing by itself, you can expect a cost of approximately $250 to $300. The cost can be several times higher; however, depending on how many "drop tests" you need and the availability of testers in your area. Be sure to ask whether your quoted price is for the whole "surface system" or whether the price will apply separately to each piece of equipment the test equipment is dropped from.
Photos may increase the cost of your inspection report, but they can be very helpful in understanding your inspection. They can also help communicate your needs to other contractors who may be doing repairs or renovations. Be sure to ask whether photos will be included in your inspection report.
In some more remote areas, there could be a greater cost associated with hiring a playground inspector because of longer traveling distances for the inspector. One way to approach this challenge is for owners/operators of playgrounds pool their resources and have a playground inspector inspect multiple playground sites on the same visit.

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