

ABC's of Skateboarding Parks

Allow for easy access to the park so maintenance staff can do repairs. Also, consider placing it near public transportation to make it more accessible to skateboarders.

Be sure to create a daily, monthly and annual inspection schedule. This will help identify any problems with the park and allow for proper maintenance upon discovery of defects.

Consult the skateboarding community before designing the park and keep lines of communication open between skateboarders and the Municipality. This will increase the feeling of ownership skateboarders have for the park.

Design the park so ramps offer various levels of difficulty to keep both new and advanced skateboarders interested.

Ensure there are signs explaining the difficulty levels of each ramp (consider using "ski hill" markings).

Fencing the skateboarding park will prevent cars, small children and animals from gaining access to the park.

Give BMX bikers and inline skaters a separate area to use to avoid unnecessary collisions and injury.

Homemade equipment should be forbidden. Have the equipment removed, and advise anyone who brings their own equipment to the park that this is not permitted.

If the park is unsupervised, clearly-worded signs must be posted warning participants and parents they are assuming the risks.

Janitors don't work at the parks, so ensure there are garbage cans accessible for the dispensing of waste.

Kee the fence to the skateboard park locked at night to prevent unauthorized use during off hours.

Location is key. The skateboard park should be in open view to reduce the risk of vandalism or other prohibited and/or criminal activities and should not end near a roadway.

Manage the risks by ensuring staff are properly trained on safety and operational procedures. Document all training and orientation.

Note when inspections and repairs are carried out. Keeping detailed records can help with your defence in the event of a claim.

Offer classes or seminars to beginners to help reduce the likelihood of injuries.

Provide safe areas for participants to rest and spectators to watch.

Quality control is increased when a Municipality purchases equipment from established or reputable manufacturers. In doing so, you transfer your exposure related to improper equipment design, poor workmanship etc.

Railings and guards should be taken into consideration when designing the park.

Supervisors should be trained in first aid and CPR, and have a good knowledge of skateboarding to judge the skill levels of users.

Try to incorporate skateboarding lingo in your signs. An example of this would be to use the phrase "Wear the Gear" instead of "Use of protective equipment is mandatory."

Use simple language when writing signs so they are understandable to all level of readers.

Vision and hearing should not be obstructed by protective gear.

Work with professional park designers and ensure you have a contract that includes a Hold Harmless/Indemnification Clause, as well as Commercial General Liability Insurance and Errors & Omissions Insurance.

Xposures to negligence in skateboard parks result from three main areas: design, supervision and maintenance.

Your Municipality, under the Occupier's Act/Common Law, has a duty to maintain the premise for the purposes that the premises were intended for. Inspect, maintain and document.

Zig-zagging or other dangerous and erratic moves should be avoided. Eliminate this risk when designing for traffic flow.

