

Wheaton Park District
SOCCER GOAL SAFETY AND EDUCATION POLICY

I. INTRODUCTION AND IDENTIFICATION OF ACT

This Soccer Goal Safety and Education Policy (“Policy”) is adopted pursuant to the Illinois Movable Soccer Goal Safety Act, also known as Zach’s Law.

The Act requires **Wheaton Park District** to create a Policy to outline how it will specifically address the safety issues associated with movable soccer goals.

II. DEFINITIONS

The following words shall have the following meanings when used in this Policy.

“Act” means the Illinois Movable Soccer Goal Safety Act, also known as Zach’s Law.

“Authorized Personnel” means Wheaton Park District Park Services employees who have responsibility for or contact with Movable Soccer Goals.

“Board” means the Board of Commissioners of the District.

“District” means Wheaton Park District.

“Movable Soccer Goal(s)” means a freestanding structure consisting of at least 2 upright posts, a crossbar, and support bars that is designed: (1) to be used for the purposes of a soccer goal; (2) to be used without any other form of support or restraint other than pegs, stakes, augers, counterweights, or other types of temporary anchoring devices; and (3) to be able to be moved to different locations.

“Organization” means any unit of local government other than the District, and any school district, sporting club, soccer organization, religious organization, business, or other similar organization.

“Permitted User(s)” means an Organization and all of its employees, agents, coaches and volunteers, which use Property for Soccer-Related Activities.

“Policy” means this Soccer Goal Safety and Education Policy.

“Property” means real property owned or leased by the District where Movable Soccer Goals are used.

“Safety Guidelines” mean the Guidelines for Safely Securing Movable Soccer Goals attached to this Policy as Attachment 1.

“Soccer-Related Activity” means use of Movable Soccer Goals on Property, including without limitation, soccer games, scrimmages, practices, camps and the like.

III. MOVING AND SECURING MOVABLE SOCCER GOALS; WARNING LABELS

Prior to the commencement of the soccer season each year, the Wheaton Park District Park Services department will place and secure Movable Soccer Goals on its Property in accordance with the Safety Guidelines. Only the Park Services Department shall be permitted to move any Movable Soccer Goal the District owns, installs, or places on its own or leased property.

Thereafter, if a Movable Soccer Goal becomes unanchored or improperly secured, only Authorized Personnel shall be permitted to re-secure it in accordance with the Safety Guidelines. A warning label such as the following shall be posted on all Movable Soccer Goals:

ONLY AUTHORIZED PERSONAL MAY MOVE AND ANCHOR THIS GOAL. IF THIS GOAL IS NOT ANCHORED DOWN, DO NOT USE IT AND CONTACT 630-690-4880. SERIOUS INJURY INCLUDING DEATH CAN OCCUR IF IT TIPS OVER.

IV. ROUTINE INSPECTIONS BY DISTRICT

The District shall routinely inspect all Movable Soccer Goals that the District has installed or placed onto its Property to verify that they are properly secured and document such inspection in writing.

V. PERMITTED USER INSPECTIONS, PLACEMENT IN NON-USE POSITION AND NOTICE TO PLAYERS

As a condition of the use of Property, before and after any Soccer-Related Activity, Permitted Users shall make a physical inspection of each Movable Soccer Goal to assure that the goal is secure in accordance with the Safety Guidelines. If any Movable Soccer Goal is not properly secured, call the number (630-690-4880) on the goal immediately stating the location of the goal and do not use that goal until an authorized person secures it properly.

As a condition of the use of Property and prior to the commencement of the soccer season each year, each Organization shall advise their players and the players' parents and guardians, that Movable Soccer Goals may not be moved and that any use of a Movable Soccer Goal that is inconsistent with Soccer-Related Activity is strictly prohibited, including without limitation, playing, climbing, or hanging on any part of the Movable Soccer Goal. According to the United States Consumer Product Safety Commission, these activities can result in serious injury, including death. An official notice is attached hereto as Attachment 2.

VI. USE OF DISTRICT PROPERTY BY PERMITTED USERS

A copy of this Policy shall be provided to all Organizations using the Property for Soccer-Related Activity. Prior to using Property for Soccer-Related Activity, each Organization shall provide each of its Permitted Users with a copy of this Policy and shall require that each of its Permitted Users comply with all applicable provisions of this Policy.

VII. REMOVAL

At the conclusion of each soccer season, the Park Services Department will either remove all Movable Soccer Goals that it has installed or otherwise placed on its Property and store such goals at a secure location or otherwise secure such goals on its Property by placing the goal frames face to face (front posts and crossbars facing toward each other) and securing them at each goalpost with a lock and chain; or locking and chaining the goals to a suitable structure such as a tree or permanent fixture; or locking unused portable goals in a secure storage room after each use; or fully disassembling the goals for season storage.

VIII. ACQUISITION OF TIP-RESISTANT MOVABLE SOCCER GOALS

After August 2nd 2011 the effective date of this Policy, the District will not purchase any Movable Soccer Goal unless it is tip resistant. A Movable Soccer Goal whose inside measurements are 6.5 to 8 feet high and 18 to 24 feet wide is not tip-resistant unless it conforms to the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) standard F2673-08 for tip-resistant Movable Soccer Goals or is otherwise equipped with another design-feature approved by the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission. Notwithstanding the foregoing provisions, the District may continue to use its existing goals in a manner consistent with this Policy.

IX. APPLICABILITY

If any provision of this Policy conflicts with any provision of the Act, the provisions of the Act shall prevail. This Policy shall not create any new liability or increase any existing liability of the District, or any of its officers, employees, or agents, which exists under any other law, including but not limited to the Local Governmental and Governmental Employees Tort Immunity Act, 745 ILCS 0/1-101 *et seq.* Nor shall this Policy alter, diminish, restrict, cancel, or waive any defense or immunity of the District or any of its officers, employees, or agents, which exists under any other law, including but not limited to the Local Governmental and Governmental Employees Tort Immunity Act, 745 ILCS 10/1-101 *et seq.*

X. AVAILABILITY OF POLICY

All District employees who have responsibility for or contact with Movable Soccer Goals shall be advised of this Policy. A copy of the Policy is available to all other employees and any member of the public by requesting a copy from: PSC or Recreation.

XI. AMENDMENTS

This Policy may be amended by the District at any time.

XII. EFFECTIVE DATE: August 3, 2011

ATTACHMENT 1

GUIDELINES FOR SAFELY SECURING MOVABLE SOCCER GOALS

According to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), a properly anchored counter-weighted movable soccer goal is much less likely to tip over. Accordingly, it is **IMPERATIVE** that **ALL** movable soccer goals are always anchored properly and that they are secured to the ground (preferably at the rear of the goal), making sure the anchors are flush with the ground and clearly visible.

There are several different ways to secure a Movable Soccer Goal. The number and type of anchors to be used will depend on a number of factors, such as soil type, soil moisture content, and total goal weight. Each goal shall be secured in accordance with the appropriate anchoring system as set forth below.

In addition, warning labels required by the District's Soccer Goal Safety and Education Policy will be attached to each goal. Nets shall be secured to posts, crossbars, and backdrops with appropriately supplied hooks attached to the goals.

Recommendations according to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission

Anchor Type Used by Wheaton Park District

Peg or Stake style (varying lengths) Anchor

Typically two to four pegs or stakes are used per goal (more for heavier goals). The normal length of a peg or stake is approximately 24 inches. Care should be taken when installing pegs or stakes. Pegs or stakes should be driven into the ground with a sledge-hammer as far as possible and at an angle if possible, through available holes in the ground shoes (bar) and rear ground shoe (bar) to secure them to the ground. If the peg or stake is not flush with the ground, it should be clearly visible to persons playing near the soccer goal. Stakes with larger diameters or textured surfaces have greater holding capacity.

Sandbags/Counterweights

Sandbags or other counterweights could be an effective alternative on hard surfaces, such as artificial turf, where the surface cannot be penetrated by a conventional anchor (i.e., an indoor practice facility) The number of bags or weights needed will vary and must be adequate for the size and total weight of the goal being supported.

ATTACHMENT 2

Permitted Users Safety and Education Guidelines

DATE:

All parents and guardians of soccer players:

One of our primary objectives is that children have safe recreation areas. To that end, soccer goals should remain securely anchored to the ground and nets firmly attached to the goals. In an effort to keep the goals and nets secure and children safe, you are required to advise your children/soccer players and any other person accompanying you for whom you are responsible that the following is strictly prohibited: moving any soccer goals and any use of a soccer goal that is inconsistent with soccer-related activity, including without limitation, playing, climbing, or hanging on any part of the soccer goal and attached net. This especially applies to children climbing on or hanging from nets or goal frames. According the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, these activities can result in serious injury, including death.

If you observe any child inappropriately using a soccer goal or net, immediately and politely ask the child to stop. If the activity continues, please notify a coach or referee as soon as possible. Players violating this rule may be forced to sit out, at the coach's discretion.

Finally, if you see any soccer goal that is not anchored down or any net that is not firmly secured to the goal, please notify a coach or referee immediately.

Sincerely,

Recreation Department of the Wheaton Park District