

# REGIONAL DISTRICT OF NANAIMO

## POLICY

SUBJECT:	<i>Park Inspection</i> (Recreation & Parks)	POLICY NO: C1.4	CROSS REF.:
EFFECTIVE DATE:	March 12, 2002	APPROVED BY:	Board
REVISION DATE:		PAGE:	1 of 7

### PURPOSE

To establish the Regional District of Nanaimo's policy for the inspection and documentation of Community and Regional Parks and Trails for the purposes of increasing public safety and minimizing liability.

### DEFINITIONS

**Park:** Includes all Community and Regional Parks and Trails within the RDN's inventory. Also includes sites that may or may not be owned by the Regional District of Nanaimo where the RDN has a management responsibility for an amenity on that site. For example: a pedestrian bridge that makes up part of a district trail system, constructed by the RDN but located on Crown Land.

**Amenity:** A structure or constructed item for which the RDN has some form of management responsibility; whether it be for its maintenance, replacement, or inclusion under our liability insurance coverage.

**Special Events:** (from RDN Policy A1-11) A special event is a public ceremony involving official participation by elected officials and/or Administration of the Regional District of Nanaimo. These events could include, but are not limited to: official openings, commemorative events, volunteer appreciation activities, sod turnings, etc.

### POLICY

It is the objective of the RDN to maintain our parks to a level that includes consideration for safety, health and control of property damage. To accomplish this objective, parks must be inspected on a regular basis and these inspections must be documented. The goal of the inspection is to identify potential risk situations or hazards that are present so that staff may take preventive or remedial action as appropriate to reduce the hazards. Where a hazard cannot be removed or dealt with immediately, the hazard is still documented so that it may receive attention or remediation at the earliest possible date. It is recognized that budget constraints may affect the level of remediation and the response time. Hazards may be dealt with in order of their severity and not necessarily the order in which they were identified. Reporting forms are to be reviewed on a monthly basis, with the goal of ensuring that all identified hazards are abated as soon as possible.

It is not feasible to inspect every park within the Regional District on an annual basis. Therefore, priorities must be to target high-risk or high-use locations for more frequent inspection. The following schedule is advised:

- Each park and trail in the RDN's park inventory is to be inspected once every three years. This includes Community and Regional Parks and Trails sites, whether developed or undeveloped, with the exception of trails or user accessible areas that occur in back country or wilderness settings. In these lesser-accessed locations, park users are assumed to expect any natural conditions they may encounter, including, but not limited to: falling trees or limbs, rock fall, landslide, wild animal encounter and floods.

These inspections will include walking through all pedestrian accessible areas of the site (less the exceptions noted above) and noting any hazards that may be present. The inspection form gives a listing of items to observe. Small and undeveloped community park properties may be inspected from a vehicle, with attention paid to any dead or hazardous trees, potential fire hazards or other safety concerns.

- Playgrounds are considered to be both high-use and high-risk locations and shall be inspected quarterly.
- Sports Fields shall be inspected twice per year. This will typically occur at the beginning and the end of the core user-season.
- Less thorough inspections of parks should also be carried out and documented during the site visits that occur in the course of routine operations. These inspections will only cover the area of the park in the visible vicinity that the site visit occurs (i.e.: a visit to Benson Creek Falls Regional Park to install an entrance gate will not require inspection of the park's entire trail network).
- Prior to a *special event* being held within an RDN park, an inspection is to be completed.
- Inspections for hazard trees are to be included as part of park inspections. While it is recognized that trees may fall and cause damage, it is not possible to observe or inspect every tree within the RDN's park inventory on any schedule. Hazard trees will be watched for in the field during site visits. Hazard trees that are identified and are within striking distance of people or property will be assessed for the level of risk that they represent. If considered to be high risk, they will be removed as work schedules or budgets permit.

All park inspections are to be documented in their respective log forms. Examples of forms are attached, and include:

- Community and Regional Park and Trail Inspection (General)
- Playground Inspection
- Sports Field Inspection
- Community Park Monitoring (for completion and submission by contractors)

The respective inspection forms will be created for new parks and amenities as they are acquired. Forms completed by staff and contractors are to be filed with the Parks function and will be converted to a digital record when such a system exists.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Recreation and Parks Department is responsible and accountable for establishing and maintaining standards of park property maintenance, ensuring that hazards are guarded against or eliminated, and directing the inspection of park property.

Staff are responsible for performing park inspections diligently, accurately documenting site visits and any hazards present, and bringing noted hazards to the attention of supervisors for consideration of remedial action. Once a hazard has been identified, staff are responsible for providing intermediate remedial or preventive action to prevent future loss or damage if practical.

### **Operational Considerations:**

- In addition to any barriers or cordoned off areas around suspected or potential hazards, signs may be utilized to advise the public of the hazard. This may be of particular value in situations where the hazard may not be abated in a timely manner.
- Purchase orders can be used in conjunction with inspection logs to document site visits, the presence of contractor(s) or staff at a park site on a given date, and work ordered or completed.
- Park stewards, volunteers and/or contractors may be relied upon to periodically report park conditions to staff. This will be particularly useful in monitoring locations that staff are unable to visit frequently.
- Inspection forms are to be kept in department vehicle(s).
- Park inspections may be used to identify maintenance or development needs that fall outside the range of routine operating budgets so that they may be budgeted for.
- In addition to staff inspections, ground and turf conditions on sports fields can be monitored by coaches, field users, and the contractor responsible for mowing the turf. The mowing contractor will be instructed to report any unsafe conditions noted to the Recreation and Parks Department.
- It shall be noted that staff, while experienced and capable, may sometimes be unable to determine whether or not certain electrical, mechanical, plumbing equipment, or structural components are hazardous. In the event staff suspect that one of the above items hazardous, a supervisor will be notified and, if the situation requires, the area will be cordoned off or otherwise labeled so as to warn the public of the hazard. Following this, qualified personnel may be retained to inspect or remedy the problem.



## Playground Inspection Form

### Boulton Community Park (G-10)

#### EQUIPMENT

ITEM	Swing, Belt	Slide	Climbers	Spring Toys (2)		General Site Conditions
Chains						
S-Hooks						
Seats						
Hanger bearings						
Stability in ground/tilting						
Exposed concrete						
Entanglement points						
End/centre fittings						
Support bars/Legs						
Fastening points						
Sharp edges/points						
Nuts & Bolts						
Ground clearance						
Protrusions						
Protective surfacing material/Borders						
Equipment spacing/No-encroachment						
Debris/Broken glass						
Paths						
Signs						
a Condition: Satisfactory						
r Condition: Attention required						
DATE COMPLETED						
ACTION TAKEN						

Inspected By:	
Date:	NOTES:
Time:	

**Sports Field Inspection**

**Rollo McClay Community Park (B-14)**

ITEM	OK	Comments
<b>FIELDS</b>		
<b>Turf:</b> Debris on field, raised or damaged sprinkler heads, severe divots or trip hazards		
<b>Backstop:</b> stability in ground, loose fasteners, cracked metal		
<b>Home plate/backstop playing area:</b> free of glass and debris		
<b>Base lines and diamond:</b> free of glass and debris		
<b>Soccer goal posts:</b> secure seams/joints, anchors secured in ground ( <i>inspector to tip goal over if not anchored</i> )		
<b>Bleachers:</b> sharp edges, stability, loose fasteners, cracked or damaged components		
<b>Fences:</b> stability, secured to post or backing		
<b>BUILDING</b>		
<b>Doors:</b> secure on hinges, locked		
<b>Washrooms:</b> vandalism, broken components, mirrors, water or waste on floor		
<b>Storage Room:</b> tidiness, spills on floor, garbage can		
<b>Pump room:</b> damage or signs of tampering on tank and components, water on floor, chlorinator functioning, tidiness		
<b>GENERAL SITE CONDITIONS</b>		
<b>Paths and walkways:</b> free of debris, holes, overhanging branches, trees		
<b>Signs:</b> vandalism, legibility		
<b>Parking lot:</b> free of debris, tire hazards, overhanging branches, trees		
<b>a =Condition: Satisfactory</b>		
<b>r = Attention required</b>		
<b>DATE COMPLETED</b>		
<b>ACTION TAKEN</b>		

Inspected By:	
Date:	NOTES:
Time:	

EXAMPLE

**COMMUNITY PARK MONITORING REPORT (to be completed by contractor)**

Item	Killer Whale Lookout		Tashteego		Blue Heron		Rollo McClay	
	OK	Needs Attention	OK	Needs Attention	OK	Needs Attention	OK	Needs Attention
Vandalism or damage to beach access stairs								
Debris/broken glass								
Vandalism or damage to signs								
Access paths- drainage, surfacing, overall condition								
Hazard trees- hanging or broken branches, leaning, damage to stem/roots								
Benches/picnic tables								
Vandalism/Damage to fencing								
Vandalism or damage to buildings								
Other concerns								

**Date Completed:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Time:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Inspected by:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Comments:**

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