



Hurricane Preparedness Checklist

FOR COMMERCIAL PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT



BEFORE THE STORM

Commercial playgrounds play an important role in bringing communities together but are often overlooked when preparing for a hurricane. By preparing your commercial playground equipment before a storm, you can help minimize damage to your equipment, reduce the costs associated with that damage, and minimize possible playground closures after a storm. Most importantly, taking steps to prepare your commercial playground equipment before the storm can help reduce the risk of injury to children once the storm passes.

- Well before a storm approaches, trim and remove dead or overhanging tree branches that can become destructive debris during a storm.
- Inspect the playground equipment. Replace any missing nuts and bolts and tighten any loose ones.
- Have spare parts on hand and any lubricant recommended by your playground equipment manufacturer.
- Before the storm arrives, remove accessories like swings and store them in a safe place.
- When winds are expected to be 80 mph or greater, remove shade fabrics and store them in a safe place.

AFTER THE STORM

Not all storm damage is apparent at first glance. The entire playground area should be inspected once the storm has passed and before opening it for use. If you notice obvious damage like fallen trees on the equipment, take steps to secure the area and take pictures of the damage. If the playground equipment was submerged during the storm, call a professional playground specialist to inspect the footings and safety surfacing.

- Remove any, fallen trees, tree branches, and other debris from the playground equipment and surrounding area.
- Inspect the playground equipment. Replace any missing nuts and bolts and tighten any loose ones.
- Use fresh water to flush out sand, dirt, salt water, and debris from the playground equipment. Salt water from rising storm water is corrosive.
- Once dried, lubricate the playground equipment as directed by the manufacturer.
- Inspect the safety surfacing material. Different types of safety surfacing require different care. See the Safety Surfacing section.
- Inspect concrete footers for signs of erosion. If there is erosion and footers are exposed, contact a professional playground specialist.
- Reattach accessories like swings making sure that they operate as intended.
- Reattach shade fabrics as recommended by the manufacturer.

SAFETY SURFACING

Poured-in-Place Rubber

- Inspect the surfacing for tears or gouges caused by debris. Small tears can become larger, more expensive problems if not repaired.
- Check voids in the surfacing for sand, silt, dirt, or debris. Flush with fresh water. If using a pressure washer, use light pressure to avoid further damage.

Synthetic Turf

- Inspect turf for damage or wrinkling. If wrinkled, contact a playground specialist to restretch it.
- Check the infill material. Infill material will often float or blow away during a storm and the turf will start to lay over and become matted without it.
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Wood Mulch or Chips

- Check for the proper depth of remaining material. It must be maintained to minimize injuries from falls. Contact a playground specialist if replenishment is needed.



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