



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs
100 Cambridge Street, Suite 900
Boston, MA 02114

Charles D. Baker
GOVERNOR

Karyn E. Polito
LIEUTENANT
GOVERNOR

Kathleen A.
Theoharides
SECRETARY

Tel: (617) 626-1000
Fax: (617) 626-1081
<http://www.mass.gov/eea>

Memorandum

From: Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs

Date: June 9, 2020

Subject: Safety Standards for Playgrounds, Spray Decks and Outdoor Fitness Areas – Phase II

The Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA) is providing guidance for the operation of all playgrounds and spray decks in parks, reservations and open space in Phase II of the Commonwealth's Reopening. This guidance shall apply until amended or rescinded.

All visitors to playgrounds, spray decks and outdoor fitness areas (including associated seating or picnic areas), and managers associated with properties or activities herein, should abide by the specific guidelines outlined. Property-specific guidelines should be posted at entrance points to areas and on relevant social media/websites.

This guidance applies until amended or rescinded. Any questions regarding this guidance can be sent to outdoor.recreation@mass.gov

General Guidelines

Face Coverings and Masks: Consistent with [*COVID-19 Order 31: Order Requiring Face Coverings in Public Places Where Social Distancing is Not Possible*](#), which requires persons to wear face coverings while in public places to prevent the spread of COVID-19, and the Safer at Home Advisory issued by the Department of Public Health issued on May 18, 2020, all persons over the age of two must wear a face covering when they attend outdoor gatherings if the circumstances of the gathering could limit their ability to maintain at least six feet of distance from others, unless they are prevented from wearing a face covering by a medical or disabling condition. All persons are likewise advised to avoid close personal contact to prevent spreading the virus.

Group Size: No groups larger than 10 are allowed to gather. <https://www.mass.gov/doc/march-31-2020-assemblage-guidance/download>

Social Distancing and Hygiene

- ❖ Persons using playgrounds, spray decks and outdoor fitness areas must maintain 6 feet from all other persons.
- ❖ Playground, spray deck and outdoor fitness area operators should post signage encouraging distancing and use of face coverings.
- ❖ Parents, guardians and other adults supervising children should monitor children at all times to ensure children maintain proper distancing and adhere to requirements for face coverings.
- ❖ Where possible, playground and outdoor fitness area operators or staff (if available) are encouraged to limit capacity to allow for social distancing. If the facility is unstaffed, parents and guardians will be required to seek alternative facilities if the playground or spray deck is crowded such that social distancing cannot be maintained.
- ❖ Children and adults who feel sick or are recovering from an illness may not visit the playground, spray deck or outdoor fitness area.
- ❖ Users shall abide by social distancing standards for bathroom lines and follow any established visual guidelines for maintaining a 6 feet distance in all restroom facilities
- ❖ Restroom facilities, if available, should contain hand washing and/or sanitizer stations, and the public should use these stations before and after the use of the facilities.
- ❖ After visiting public spaces, users should use wash their hands or use hand sanitizer.
- ❖ Playground and outdoor fitness area managers are encouraged, if feasible, to modify play structures to encourage social distancing (such as removing swings or moving seating).

General Sanitation

- ❖ Playground, spray deck and outdoor fitness area operators should familiarize themselves with guidance from the [Centers for Disease Control guidance on cleaning your facility](#).
- ❖ In accordance with CDC guidance, outdoor areas, like playgrounds and outdoor fitness areas, generally require normal routine cleaning, but do not require disinfection.
- ❖ Cleaning:
 - High touch surfaces made of plastic or metal, including grab bars and railings, tables and benches, should be frequently cleaned
 - Cleaning and disinfection of wooden surfaces or groundcovers (mulch, sand) is not recommended.

- ❖ Consult with the company or engineer that designed the spray deck to decide which List N disinfectants approved by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) are best for your spray deck venue.
- ❖ Ensure safe and correct use and storage of cleaners and disinfectants and store them securely away from children.
- ❖ All handwash sinks shall be fully stocked with soap and paper towels.
- ❖ Alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60 percent alcohol shall be available to any staff.
- ❖ Close playground, spray decks and outdoor fitness area facilities used by a sick person and wait 24 hours before cleaning and disinfecting these facilities.

Restrooms & Trash Disposal

- ❖ Consult the [*EEA May 18, 2020 Outdoor Recreation Facility Restroom Cleaning Best Practices Memorandum*](#) which details the standards and processes for the cleaning and disinfecting of certain outdoor recreation facility restrooms.
- ❖ In advance of the initial opening of public restrooms, the managing entity must adhere to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines pertaining to the cleaning and disinfection standards of operating procedures for interior spaces and that social distancing can be maintained.
- ❖ Furthermore, the managing entity must have the facilities cleaned at least once daily and perform deep cleaning and disinfection services at least once per week.
- ❖ Visitors of playgrounds, spray decks and outdoor fitness areas should expect limited or no trash disposal receptacles.
- ❖ When visiting public properties without trash receptacles, visitors should adhere to a strict “carry in, carry out” policy and take waste with them.
- ❖ Where trash receptacles are available for normal use, facility managers shall where feasible, provide no touch, lidless trashcans.