

AB 1144

California Playground Regulations Update

AB 1144 - Harman - The California Playground Safety Regulations Revision Bill passed on August 22, 2006 and was signed by Governor Schwarzenegger on September 26, 2006. Congratulations CPRS! Compliance became mandatory on January 1, 2008. To view the final bill, follow the link to AB 1144. The three most significant changes are:

1. Playgrounds open to the public built by a public agency or any other entity shall conform to the playground related standards set forth by the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) and the playground related guidelines set forth by the United States Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC)

ASTM Playground Related Specifications include the most current version of:

- F 1292 Standards for Surface Impact Attenuation
- F 1918 Specifications for Soft Contained Play Equipment (Typically found in Fast Food Restaurants)
- F 1951 Standards for Surface Accessibility
- F 1487 Standards for Playground Equipment for Children between 2 years and 12 years old
- F 2049 Standards for Playground Fencing (Fencing is not required but if you do use a fence, it must comply)
- F 2075 Standards for Engineered Wood Fiber
- F 2223 Standard guide for selecting Playground Surfacing
- F 2373 Standards for Playground Equipment for Children between 6 months and 23 months old.

CPSC Playground Related Guidelines - CPSC Handbook for Playground Safety Publication #325-10 published in November, 2010.

2. The definition of a playground is changed to mean an improved outdoor area designed, equipped, and set aside for children's play that is not intended for use as an athletic playing field or athletic court, and shall include any playground equipment, fall zones, surface materials, access ramps, and all areas within and including the designated enclosure and barriers. References to landforms, fences, benches etc have been removed.

3. All public agencies operating playgrounds and all other entities operating playgrounds open to the public shall have a playground safety inspector, certified by the National Playground Safety Institute, conduct an initial inspection for the purpose of aiding compliance with the requirements set forth in subdivision. This eliminates the reference to a manufacturer certified playground installer. An installer may certify that play equipment is in compliance only if the installer is a CPSI.

Major ASTM F 1487 changes since the 97 version. Please read the entire document to familiarize yourself with the revisions.

- Accessibility – shall comply with Disability Act Accessibility Guidelines. (ADA/ABA Chapter 10 Section 1008). <http://www.access-board.gov/ADA-ABA/final.htm> ASTM F 1487 does not address Accessibility except as it pertains to safety.
- Age Appropriate Signs or labels - All play structures are required to be posted with information as to the age appropriateness of users and to recommend supervision.
- Climbing Net Structures – New section added. Interior and exterior fall heights are defined.
- General Measures, Tolerances and Conversion – New section was added to define measurement tolerances.
- Fall Heights – The fall heights of various pieces of play equipment have been defined.
- Manufacturers Identification – All play structures are required to have a manufacturer's identification sign or label.
- Merry-go-rounds with platform diameters of less than 20 inches are exempt from the speed limitation requirements.
- Pinch Crush and Shear Point – Pinch was removed from the definition. It is now a Crush and Shear Point.
- Public use play equipment – shall be anchored to the ground or not intended to be relocated.

- Rocking/Springing equipment - use zones and the use zones of other equipment may be 72 inches apart if they are both less than 30 inches high. If either piece of equipment or structure is over 30 inches high they shall be a minimum of 108 inches apart.
- Rotating Equipment - the use zones of vertical axis equipment that is less than 20 inches in diameter may overlap if the adjacent surface is less than 30 inches high.
- Rotating Equipment that rotates around a horizontal Axis and is less than 30 inches high is considered stationary equipment. No other play structure use zone may overlap the use zone of equipment that rotates around a horizontal axis that is higher than 30 inches.
- Roofs – new section was added. Roofs a minimum of 84 inches above the deck have no fall height requirements.
- Site furnishings installed outside of the equipment zones -are not considered play equipment and are not included in the specification.
- Slide Exit Safety Zone – Equal to the height of the slide but no less than 6 feet and no more than 8 feet.
- Slide Clearance Zone – Definition has been defined as 21 inches out from the inside of the slide sidewall and extends the length of the exit zone.
- Stationary Equipment – There are no individual use zone requirements for equipment that requires the user to maintain constant contact with the ground. This includes sand digger toys, speaking tubes, activity panels and ground level sand boxes.
- Stepping Forms – New section added. One or more individual freestanding devices used to develop balance.
- Swing Support Structure Use Zones – The restriction that the use zones of other equipment may not overlap the use zone of the support structures for swings has been lifted. The minimum distance shall be 108 inches.