

SECTION 537

MOVEABLE SOCCER GOAL SAFETY POLICY

537.1 Introduction

This policy presents guidelines for the use and storage of full-size or nearly full-size movable soccer goals. The Park District of La Grange (District) believes these guidelines can help prevent deaths and serious injuries resulting from soccer goal tipover. Publication of the policy is intended to promote greater safety awareness among those who use and maintain movable soccer goals on fields owned or operated by the Park District of La Grange.

These guidelines are intended to educate the public and reduce the risk of movable soccer goal tipover. They are not a District standard, nor are they mandatory requirements and the District will not supervise compliance. Therefore, the District does not endorse or recognize them as the sole method to minimize injuries associated with movable soccer goals.

537.2 Rules of Soccer

The guidelines contained in this policy are intended to be compatible with the recommendations for the design and construction of soccer goals, published by the Federation of International Football Associations (FIFA) and the National Federation of State High School Associations.

537.3 Design/Construction Guidelines

While a movable soccer goal appears to be a simple structure, a movable soccer goal should be constructed with counterbalancing measures incorporated into the product. The stability of a movable soccer goal depends on several factors. One effective strategy for supplementing the counterbalancing measures incorporated into the product is lengthening the overall depth of the goal to effectively place more weight further from the goal's front posts (more weight at the back of the goal). A second design selects lightweight materials for the goal's front posts and crossbar and provides much heavier materials for the rear ground bar and frame members. This tends to counterbalance the forces working to tip the goal forward. Another option uses a heavy rear framework and folds flat when not in use, making the goal much less likely to tip over.

Manufacturers of soccer goals can signify that elements designed to reduce the risk of tipover injuries have been incorporated into the product by indicating the goal is compliant with American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) standard F2673-08, or any successive standard, for tip-resistant movable soccer goals.

537.4 Anchoring/Securing/Counterweighing Guidelines

A properly anchored/counterweighted movable soccer goal is much less likely to tip over. There are several different ways to anchor 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. The types of anchors recognized by the District to increase the safety of moveable soccer goals include but are not limited to: augers, peg or stake style anchors, J-hook style anchors and sandbags or other counterweights. Net pegs, by themselves, are not recognized as a means to effectively anchor or counterbalance a moveable soccer goal. The Park District of La Grange encourages coaches/referees/league officials affiliated with each game to inspect the anchoring/securing/counterweighing measures used for each movable soccer goal and to immediately report any issues to the Park District.

537.5 Guidelines for Goal Storage or Securing When Goal is Not in Use

The majority of soccer goal tipover incidents occur when the goals are unattended. Therefore, when goals are stored in a safe manner it reduces the risk of tipover when not being used. When goals are not being used steps should be taken to secure the goals, such as locking goal frames face to face or chaining the face of goal frames to a permanent and fixed structure, including a fence. If it is a collapsible goal, fold the face of the goal down and lock it to its base. The Park District of La Grange encourages coaches/referees/league officials affiliated with the last game scheduled each day to store and secure the movable soccer goals in one of the foregoing ways.

537.6 Safety Tips

Even well designed and counterbalanced goals are subject to tipover incidents. Additional steps may be taken to further reduce the risk of injury. The Park District of La Grange encourages coaches/referees/league officials affiliated with each game to:

- Check for structural integrity and proper connecting hardware before every use.
- Report damaged or missing parts or fasteners immediately and do not use damaged or improperly anchored goals.
- Not allow anyone to climb on the net or goal framework.
- Exercise caution when moving goals and allow adequate manpower to move goals of varied sizes and weights.
- Instruct players on the safe handling of and potential dangers associated with movable soccer goals.

The District shall place safety/warning labels in clearly visible locations (placed under the crossbar and on the sides of the down-posts at eye level).

The District will deliver a copy of this policy to the representative of any leagues or teams permitted to use Park District of La Grange parks and facilities for soccer purposes and encourage such league to distribute additional copies to each coach, referee and parent/guardian.

Any organization which is granted permission by the District, whether by permit, license or other agreement, to use the District's facilities for soccer purposes, shall be required to adopt a movable soccer goal safety policy and place it on file with the District.

537.7 Definitions

For the purpose of this policy, the following terms shall have the meaning ascribed thereto:

Movable soccer goal A freestanding structure consisting of at least 2 upright posts, a crossbar, and support bars that is designed, intended and permitted: (1) to be used by adults or children for the purposes of a soccer goal; (2) to be used without any other form of support or restraint (other than temporary anchoring devices); and (3) to be moved to different locations.