



## **Inflatable Equipment Coverage Safety Recommendations**

With the increasing demands of fundraisers and special events, the inflatable equipment business has grown into a flourishing industry. Unfortunately, this increase in business has also escalated the injuries associated with inflatable usage.

The following recommendations are provided to help mitigate loss when inflatables are utilized on school property.

### Coverage Recommendations for School Districts

1. A certificate of general liability coverage with limits of no less than \$1,000,000 per occurrence with an acceptable insurer should be obtained, preferably naming the district as an additional insured.
2. The district should not sign any agreements holding the vendor harmless nor should the district accept any obligation to cover the vendor's interest for liability under its property-liability coverage.
3. If the vendor will be bringing vehicles onto school property and performing installation, the district should secure proof of insurance for auto insurance and workers' compensation coverage.

### Safety Recommendations for School Districts

1. Check reference of prospective vendors to determine their safety record, inspection guidelines and Better Business Bureau rating.
2. Determine if the vendor or school district will install the equipment.
3. If the school district is responsible for installation, make sure directions are provided and followed according to manufacturer's guidelines.
4. Equipment selected should age and ability appropriate.
5. Make provisions for adequate supervision of the equipment while in use to assure that:
  - a. The equipment is located so there is a sufficient landing area surrounding the equipment
  - b. The equipment is inspected for tears and defects
  - c. Equipment remains properly secured in place
  - d. Any blowers are properly guarded
  - e. The number of individuals utilizing the equipment does not exceed load capacity
  - f. Individuals utilizing the equipment follow general safety procedures
  - g. No shoes, food or drink are allowed on the equipment

- h. No sharp objects or loose strings are allowed on the equipment
  - i. Pets are kept away from the equipment
  - j. First aid is available
6. The district should adhere to any other reasonable safety guidelines provided by the vendor.
7. For private events, such as a school carnival, parental permission slips should be secured for all users.

<b>Recent CNN Reported Injuries Involving Inflatables:</b>	
<b>May 2014</b>	<b>South Glens Falls, NY</b> Bounce house swept away by a wind gust went 20 feet in the air and seriously injured two boys, ages 5 and 6 that were playing inside the house.
<b>June 2014</b>	<b>Littleton, CO</b> Two children were tossed from a bounce slide when it blew between 200 and 300 away from where it was set up. The kids suffered minor injuries.

Due to the number of injuries and incidents, the Consumer Product Safety Commission has also issued industry-wide safety recommendations for inflatables. These should also be reviewed before setup.

### Consumer Product Safety Commission Recommendations

1. Inspection procedures and guidelines for safe set-up and operation of inflatable rides must follow manufacturer's requirements.
2. For slides over 15 feet tall, there should be a minimum of two operators.
3. For an inflatable bounce or small slide under 15 feet, there should be one operator.
4. Maximum recommended weight per passenger is 200 lbs. or manufacturer's recommendation.
5. DO NOT exceed manufacturer's requirements for maximum loads for individual rides.
6. Follow the operator's manual for site layout, inflation procedures, ropes, tethers, tie-downs, anchors, use temperature range, maximum number of riders, size of riders, electrical codes, daily operations, daily inspection, washing, repairing, deflation, drying, storage and transportation.
7. ALWAYS anchor rides pre manufacturer's requirements and instructions. The on-ground anchor weight used for various inflatable rides range from 75-pounds (for bounce type of rides) to 500-pounds (for slide-type rides) for each recommended anchor position. This weight range necessitates strict adherence to manufacturer's requirements.
8. Place and use anchors at all of the manufacturer's required positions, at all times, for both indoor and outdoor use.
9. Anchor ropes, tethers and tie-downs should be attached to a secure device or permanent structure and attached so they cannot slip off the top of their stake during use. DO NOT attach anchors to motor vehicles.
10. Ropes, tethers and tie-downs should be sufficiently strong to resist breakage during use.
11. Identify and use the number and location of tie-downs specified by manufacturer.
12. Do not use the inflatable ride above wind speeds that exceed manufacturer's recommendations. Unload and deflate any inflatable ride when the wind speed exceeds 25 mph.
13. Inflatable rides need a sealed chamber to prevent the rapid collapse of ceilings and walls onto the riders if the electric power to the blower fails.