

Keep Parks & Public Recreation Spaces Welcoming and Safe

The global pandemic has fostered an increased appreciation for outdoor spaces and recreation opportunities, and spending time in nature has been shown effective in enhancing physical and mental health. Greater usage of parks and public recreation areas not only benefits individuals but also builds interpersonal connections and strengthens communities.

With higher usage, however, comes the need for additional maintenance, upkeep, and repairs. A comprehensive maintenance plan is critical to maintain functionality, maximize safety and create a welcoming environment, therefore encouraging people to visit and perpetuating a thriving destination.

Here are reminders of important ways to keep parks and public recreation spaces welcoming and safe.

Landscaping and Grounds

Depending on where you are located, this may mean mowing the grass or removing ice and snow.

- **Trim bushes and trees.** Eliminate overgrowth, low-hanging branches, or unstable branches to maintain open space.
- **Pull weeds, dead plants, and undergrowth.** Keep your park beautiful by staying on top of routine landscaping duties.
- **Maintain greenery.** Apply fertilizers and pesticides as needed, check irrigation and sprinkler systems.
- **Remove leaves.** Clear walkways, paths and sports courts and fields of fallen leaves to reduce tripping or slipping hazards and increase safety.
- **Minimize stinging insects.** Before special events or athletic competitions, use Lawson Products Drummond™ Kibosh wasp/bee/hornet and yellow jacket spray to reduce nuisance and enhance comfort.
- **Address ice and snow.** As necessary in your climate, clear snow and eliminate ice in parking lots and on walkways and stairs. Consider Drummond™ Sluff Snowplow treatment to reduce buildup and keep snowplows running smoothly, or Titan® Ice Melter with Propel® which increases melting speed.

Infrastructure and Equipment

Buildings, athletic fields, and other park facilities need ongoing inspections and maintenance to ensure functionality, safety, and aesthetic appeal.

- **Sports fields and courts.** Inspect turf (if applicable) and court surfaces, along with nets, goal cages and benches and seating for signs of wear. Replace light bulbs, collect litter, and note placement and number of trash receptacles.

- **Hiking trails.** Clear brush, overgrowth, obstacles, and trash; check maps and signage and replace if necessary.
- **Picnic tables/pavilions/shelters.** Conduct visual inspections for damage, wood splinters or broken tables or benches. Repair or replace if needed and add or clean trash cans.
- **Restrooms.** In addition to regular cleaning and disinfecting, trash removal and replacing supplies, check plumbing, stall doors and walls and electric fittings and sockets repair as necessary. Replace light bulbs.
- **Parking lots.** Look for and fix broken concrete and potholes and conduct regular sweeping and sealcoating. Repaint parking space lines and curbs for clear visibility. Try the Lawson Traffic Line Marking Machine or stock up on traffic marking paint to be ready anytime.
- **Maintenance equipment.** Take care of all tools – such as movers, trimmers, drills and more – with periodic inspections to enable staff to perform their job effectively and efficiently.

Playgrounds

Help keep children safe and prolong the life of your playground equipment with routine inspections and maintenance.

- **Inspect equipment.** Playground equipment is subject to a lot of wear and tear, so look for and fix broken pieces, jagged edges and protruding nails or bolts. Tighten loose hardware and replace worn or rusted components.
- **Examine fill material.** Assess fill material, such as engineered wood fiber or shredded rubber mulch, for adequate amount and depth, and replenish or replace.
- **Clean and disinfect.** Obviously, playground equipment is exposed to the elements year-round, but following manufacturers' recommendations for cleaning and disinfecting can improve functionality and longevity. The odorless Husky® 803 Virucidal Sanitizer and Disinfectant kills a variety of germs on hard surfaces.

Security

If a park or public recreation space is perceived as unsafe, it won't attract visitors.

- **Signage.** Post and maintain clear signage about park hours and rules in visible areas. Add clearly labeled park and trail maps for ease of navigation.
- **Lighting.** Regularly inspect lighting throughout the area and replace bulbs immediately. Lawson Products offers a variety of bulbs for convenient ordering.
- **Video surveillance.** If possible, install security cameras in strategic areas to deter vandalism, theft, and other crimes.

Learn more about [lawn and grounds products here](#).



Note that municipal teams can save their maintenance departments time and money by participating in a co-op for efficient, economical procurement of a variety of required resources. Lawson Products, a distributor of maintenance and repair products in North America, helps equip public park and recreational area teams across North America to handle a multitude of jobs. The Company offers cooperative contracting solutions through AEPA state agencies. Lawson's inventory management solution:

- Eliminates time spent taking inventory and re-ordering small parts
- Minimizes time spent looking for products
- Reduces unplanned trips to off-site stores looking for parts
- Includes product application advice and on-site training
- Decreases project downtime by having the right parts stocked and ready for use

To learn more about Lawson Products solutions and vendor managed inventory go to Lawsonproducts.com or contact Deanie Sweeney, Manager, Government Programs, Lawson Products, at Deanie.Sweeney@lawsonproducts.com