

TORONTO STAFF REPORT

June 4, 2002

To: Economic Development and Parks Committee

From: Joe Halstead, Commissioner Economic Development, Culture and Tourism

Subject: Health and Safety Issues for Children's Use of Soccer Fields

All Wards

Purpose:

To respond to a request from City Council at its meeting of March 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8, 2002 for information on the health and safety issues for children's use of soccer fields.

Financial Implications and Impact Statement:

There are no financial implications resulting from the adoption of this report.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that this report be received for information.

Background:

At its meeting of March 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8, 2002, during deliberations of the Economic Development, Culture and Tourism budget, Council adopted a motion requesting the Commissioner of Economic Development, Culture and Tourism to report back on the health and safety issues for children's use of soccer fields.

Comments:

Parks and Recreation issues permits for 396 soccer fields throughout the City, 216 of these are located in public parks, the remaining 180 are located in schoolyards. The Customer Service section of the department who issue the permits for use of the fields indicate that over 40,000 children used the fields.

The fields in use vary from small “Junior” fields to the large full size fields capable of hosting tournaments and adult league play. As indicated by the number of permits issued and participants registered, the fields are in constant use throughout the summer.

The Park Supervisor’s responsible for maintenance of the City fields and the Boards of Education responsible for the school fields are often the first point of contact for reporting an injury. Park Supervisor’s were consulted in preparation of this report and advised that although reports had been received advising of scrapes and bruises from coming in contact with the field surface, no reports of serious injury had been forthcoming.

The City’s Insurance and Risk Management Section advises that they are not aware of any legal suits or formal complaints on file with their section relating to injuries resulting from children’s use of soccer fields.

Conclusions:

Parks and Recreation has recently harmonized the level of service for soccer and sportsfields throughout the City. This harmonization provides children and other field users throughout the City with fields that are maintained at a consistent level and manner which permits their safe use by participants in sport. Parks and Recreation continues to strive to provide all residents and park users with sportsfields that are safe for use.

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