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Standard Guide for Fences/Barriers for Public, Commercial, and Multi-Family Residential Use Outdoor Play Areas¹

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1. Scope

1.1 This guide provides the recommended minimum requirements for denoting various types of fences/barriers for the protection of children's outdoor play spaces in public, commercial, and multi-family residential use locations. This guide excludes individual single family residential use play equipment locations. Interior fences located in a play area that has a perimeter fence established shall only have to comply with the latch height requirement indicated in 7.6.2.

1.2 This guide provides for the safety of occupants in play areas or zones as it pertains to vehicular intrusion as well as other participant intrusion, and for children containment or entry/exit. This guide has the intent to also keep children inside a predetermined area in an effort to enhance supervision; to keep children from running out of the area into water and other hazards; to minimize the likelihood of facial lacerations on low gate and fence hardware; to minimize the likelihood of abduction; and to restrict access to railroads, highways, roads, and other such hazards.

1.3 This guide does not choose the product components for the fence system, the choice of which should be made by the operators of the play space and their specification writers or drafters based upon their determination of the merits of the products that could be used.

1.4 The values stated in inch-pound units are to be regarded as standard. The SI values given in parentheses are for information only.

1.5 *This guide does not purport to address the aspect of safety within a play area or zone. It is the responsibility of the user of this guide to establish appropriate safety practices as related to the play area and determine the applicability of regulatory requirements prior to use.*

2. Referenced Documents

2.1 ASTM Standards:²

A 123/A 123M Specification for Zinc (Hot-Dip Galvanized) Coatings on Iron and Steel Products

A 392 Specification for Zinc-Coated Steel Chain-Link Fence Fabric

A 491 Specification for Aluminum-Coated Steel Chain-Link Fence Fabric

F 552 Terminology Relating to Chain Link Fencing

F 567 Practice for Installation of Chain-Link Fence

F 626 Specification for Fence Fittings

F 668 Specification for Polyvinyl Chloride (PVC) and Other Organic Polymer-Coated Steel Chain-Link Fence Fabric

F 1043 Specification for Strength and Protective Coatings on Steel Industrial Chain Link Fence Framework

F 1083 Specification for Pipe, Steel, Hot-Dipped Zinc-Coated (Galvanized) Welded, for Fence Structures

F 1183 Specification for Aluminum Alloy Chain Link Fence Fabric

F 1345 Specification for Zinc-5 % Aluminum-Mischmetal Alloy-Coated Steel Chain-Link Fence Fabric

F 1664 Specification for Poly(Vinyl Chloride) (PVC) and Other Conforming Organic Polymer-Coated Steel Tension Wire Used with Chain-Link Fence

2.2 CPSC Document:³

Model Pool Barriers Publication

2.3 BOCA Document:⁴

¹ This guide is under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee F14 on Fences and is the direct responsibility of Subcommittee F14.10 on Specific Applications. Current edition approved Aug. Jan. 1, 2008-2009. Published September 2008-January 2009. Originally approved in 2000. Last previous edition approved in 2008 as F 2049 – 08a.

² For referenced ASTM standards, visit the ASTM website, www.astm.org, or contact ASTM Customer Service at service@astm.org. For *Annual Book of ASTM Standards* volume information, refer to the standard's Document Summary page on the ASTM website.

³ Available from U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), 4330 East West Hwy., Bethesda, MD 20814, <http://www.cpsc.gov>.

⁴ Available from International Code Council (ICC), 5203 Leesburg Pike, Suite 600, Falls Church, VA 22041-3401, <http://www.intlcode.org>.

BOCA National Building Code/1993 – 12th Edition

2.4 *Research Reports*:⁵

National Cooperative Highway Research Program Report #54

2.5 *Building Codes*:

Standard Building Code, 1994 Edition, 2nd printing

Uniform Building Code, Vol. II, Section 311.2.3.5: Vehicle Barrier

3. Terminology

3.1 See Terminology F 552 for definitions of terms relating to chain-link fencing.

3.2 *Definitions of Terms Specific to This Standard*:

3.2.1 *fence, n*—type of containment that surrounds and obstructs primarily people passage to or from the play area.

3.2.2 *barrier, n*—type of containment or deflector system that surrounds and obstructs primarily vehicle passage into a play area, such as bollards and posts. Barriers must pass impact tests for the highest speed limit allowed and posted on the street, road, or parking lot adjacent to the outdoor play area.

3.2.3 *continuous barrier, n*—type of traffic barrier designed to prevent vehicular intrusion into a play area and that also impedes pedestrian passage to and from the play space.

3.2.4 *curb, n*—permanent, continuous structure made of concrete, asphalt, or other structural material presenting a 6 to 8 in. (15.24 to 20-32 cm) elevation change at the curbline.

3.2.5 *curbline, n*—pavement elevation change defining the edge of a fire lane, vehicular travel lane, or contiguous or individual parking spaces with depressions meeting the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

3.2.6 *debris fence, n*—shield used to prevent flying post-crash or other debris from entering a play zone.

3.2.7 *discrete barrier, n*—barrier designed to prevent vehicular intrusion that allows for pedestrian passage to and from the play space.

3.2.8 *guardrail, n*—an example of a continuous barrier.

3.2.9 *play zone or area, n*—environment for public, multi-family residential, or commercial play use containing recreation equipment intended for activities by children where entry or egress access is intended.

3.2.9.1 *Discussion*—This may be through its adjacent apartment or home decorative lattice work, public or commercial building door, or via a controlled gate. Examples include, but are not limited to, the following: fast food establishments, day-care centers, shopping malls, apartments, parks, and schools.

3.2.10 *proximity, n*—within 5 ft (1 or 1.524 m) as measured by the least distance between the edge of the driving lane to perimeter of the play zone and its fence/barrier.

3.2.11 *structural bollards, n*—steel pipe structure filled with concrete installed in the ground with a concrete footing.

3.2.11.1 *Discussion*—A structural bollard is an example of a barrier and discrete barrier.

3.2.12 *traffic, n*—movement of vehicles for purpose of driving-through or parking motions.

3.2.13 *vulnerable play zone, n*—play zone in the proximity of vehicular traffic, railroad tracks, bodies of water, streets, parking lots, roads, electrical and other utility features, and other similar life-threatening or debilitating features.

4. Site Covered

4.1 A play zone shall be protected in accordance with this guide in locations that are vulnerable to vehicular traffic, from activity and game conflicting uses, and for the control of entering or exiting the play zone or area. Protection from vehicular intrusion shall be placed as specified in Sections 6 and 7. Barriers shall protect the perimeters of the play area that are adjacent to the direction of traffic, and only apply to those perimeters that are parallel and perpendicular to the direction of traffic. Playground enclosures, such as fences, walls, or buildings, shall be on all sides of the play zone.

5. Significance and Use

5.1 This guide sets forth minimum standard requirements for use in local codes and ordinances relating to public, multi-family, residential, and commercial outdoor play areas or zones and their environments.

5.2 This guide does not have the effect of law, nor is it intended to supersede local codes and ordinances of a more restrictive nature.

5.3 This guide provides certain recommendations to assist those who intend to provide protection against injuries or fatalities associated with any possible vehicle passage into, or pedestrian passage to or from, a play environment by children. This would include, but not be limited to, state and local governments, model code organizations, building code groups, and consumers. It is understood that the format will vary depending upon the specific use and local conditions.

6. Methods of Protection

6.1 *Discrete and Continuous Barriers*— These methods of protection shall be determined by the vulnerable play area or play

⁵ Colcote, L. R., and Mitchie, J. D., "Location, Selection, and Maintenance of Highway Guardrails and Median Barriers," *National Cooperative Highway Research Program Report #54*, S. W. Research Institute, San Antonio, TX.

zone requirement for protection for vehicle intrusion and adjacent traffic circumstances. If a fence itself complies with the impact tests described in 7.1, then a barrier is not required.

6.1.1 *Continuous Barrier*—If a vulnerable play area has no exterior exit gate on the traffic side of the play zone, then the play area shall be protected with a continuous barrier on the traffic side as specified in the following sections. If pedestrian access through this continuous barrier is necessary, it shall meet applicable sections. Continuous barrier methods include, but are not limited to, guardrails, concrete or brick reinforced walls, and concrete Jersey barriers.

6.1.2 *Discrete Barrier*—If a vulnerable play area has an exit gate on the traffic side of the play zone, then pedestrian access through a barrier is necessary and a discrete barrier should be provided on the traffic side as specified in the following sections. Discrete barrier methods include, but are not limited to, the following: structural bollards, trees, posts, and other vertical structures.

6.1.3 *Fences*—All vulnerable play areas shall have fences with gates as described in 7.6. This method of protection may include chain link and other materials of a minimum height of 4 ft (1.22 m) above grade.

6.1.4 *Building*—Where a building may abut or is adjacent to a play area or play zone, it may be used as part of the containment. If the building wall contains a door for ingress and egress into the play area, it shall comply with subsequent sections. If the building wall contains windows for viewing, it shall contain glazing that is unbreakable and shatter-proof.

6.2 *Buildings*—The fence shall completely surround the play zone or area environment except where a building or dwelling or portion thereof is utilized as part of the play environment enclosure. If the exterior wall or walls of that portion of the building contains doors, or other openings, it shall comply with the following provisions.

6.2.1 *Doors*—Doors in the wall of a building or dwelling that allow direct access through the wall to the play environment shall be provided with the following:

6.2.1.1 An alarm capable of detecting unauthorized entry or exit through the gate or opening into or from the play environment area when not in use and which, when activated, emits a sound of sufficient volume to be heard in the building or dwelling as a means of outdoor area security when deemed necessary. The audible warning shall commence not more than 7 s after the door, or its screen, if present, or both are opened and shall sound continuously for a minimum of 30 s. The alarm shall have a minimum sound pressure rating of 85 dB at 10 ft (3.4 m) and the sounds of the alarm shall be distinctive from other sounds such as auto alarms, smoke alarms, telephones, and door bells. The alarm shall automatically reset after 2 min under all conditions.

7. Requirements

7.1 *Continuous Barrier:*

7.1.1 *Strength and Deflection Limits*— The barrier used shall be able to withstand a one-time 10,000 lb (4535.9 kg) concentrated, point-load located 2 ft (0.61 m) above ground with permanent deformation less than 0.1 in. (2.54 mm) after a single load when tested in accordance with the U.S. Department of Transportation specifications.

7.1.2 *Maintenance*—If any permanent deformation or damage is done to a continuous barrier, the play area facility shall be closed until a new barrier has been installed.

7.1.3 *Inspection*—A visual check shall be done by the owner or operator on a regular basis to note damage. A sign should be posted with the name and owner to be notified if damage occurs.

7.1.4 *Distance*—Minimum unobstructed distance between the continuous barrier and the play area perimeter fence protection shall be no less than 2 ft (0.61 m).

7.1.5 The continuous barrier shall be placed edge to edge unless passage through is required, which shall be no more than 48 in.

7.2 *Discrete Barriers:*

7.2.1 *Strength and Deflection Limits*— The barrier system used shall meet the requirements of 7.1.1.

7.2.2 Discrete barriers shall be placed a maximum of 42 in. (1.07 m) apart from each other (edge to edge).

7.2.3 *Maintenance*—Maintenance shall comply with 7.1.2.

7.2.4 *Distance*—The distance from discrete barrier to fence shall be in accordance with 7.1.4.

7.2.5 *Inspection*—Shall comply with 7.1.3.

7.3 *Curbs:*

7.3.1 Curbs, in order to minimize casual contact with cars, shall be placed at a minimum distance between the travel lane and the play area zone as follows:

7.3.1.1 2 ft, 6 in. where there is no parking.

7.3.1.2 4 ft for angled parking.

7.3.1.3 5 ft where there is perpendicular parking.

7.4 *Fences:*

7.4.1 *Fence Height*—The top of the fence shall be a minimum of 4 ft (1.22 m) above grade measured on the side of the fence that faces away from the play environment.

7.4.2 *Visibility*—The fence shall be designed and constructed so that it allows for a visibility to conform to the level of surveillance necessary from a designated supervising area outside or inside the play environment area to inside the play environment.

7.4.3 *Ground Clearance*—The maximum vertical clearance between grade and the bottom of the fence shall be no more than 4 in. measured on both sides of the fence around the play environment and of a minimal distance to prevent toys from rolling under.