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Installation and Maintenance of PlaySource (Playground) Mulch

Thank you for purchasing PlaySource Playground Mulch, an IPEMA certified playground surface! The following is an installation and maintenance guide for the mulch. Please follow these instructions to ensure the PlaySource Mulch is being used properly for IPEMA (International Play Equipment Manufacturers Association) and ASTM (American Society for Testing and Materials) standards.

Installation:

Prepare the site according to any project engineer directions, project specifications, and/or equipment specifications. This should include: 1.) a containing material placed around the perimeter of the playground to prevent material movement; 2.) appropriate drainage system to help filter moisture from the playground to ensure proper depth and compaction; 3.) removal of any foreign material (i.e. dirt, rock, concrete, asphalt, etc.) to provide the necessary depth of playground material if it is to be level with the ground.

It is recommended to install the PlaySource Mulch at a depth of 17", uncompacted, to ensure a 12" compaction factor to help prevent injuries for equipment that is up to ten (10) feet in height. Spread evenly across the entire playground area, checking depth as you install. Be sure to pay special attention to any fall zones, which are areas around the play equipment apparatuses, to make sure there is 17" of uncompacted PlaySource Mulch in all fall zones. In general, all areas around play equipment require a fall zone of at least six feet in all directions. Fall zones for slides are four (4) feet plus the height of the slide. For example, if the slide is five (5) feet, you will need a fall zone of nine (9) feet from the end of the slide. Fall zones for swings are twice the distance of the pivot

point of the swing to the ground, both in front and back of the swing. For example, if the pivot point of the swing is ten (10) feet from the ground, the fall zone for that swing set is twenty (20) feet, both in the front and rear of the swing set.

Maintenance:

Always keep the playground clear of any foreign material (rocks, branches, trash, etc.). Double check the depth of the installed mulch, especially in the fall zones. Add PlaySource Mulch as necessary. Rake the PlaySource Mulch to keep the surface level and the depth equal to the necessary fall zone depth. It is important to continually maintain the installed playground surface and necessary depth, as there are many factors that can change its compaction. See below.

Please Note the Following:

“The critical fall height of a playground surfacing material determined under laboratory conditions does not account for important factors that have the potential to influence the actual performance of installed surfacing materials. Factors that are known to affect surfacing material performance include but are not limited to age, moisture, maintenance, exposure to freezing temperatures, exposure to ultraviolet light, contamination with other materials, compaction, loss of thickness, shrinkage, submersion in water, and so forth” (ASTM Standard F1292-09, page 1-2, paragraph 1.6)

“While it is believed that conformance with the requirements of this specification will reduce the risk of serious injury and death from falls, adherence to this specification will not prevent all injuries and deaths” (ASTM Standard F1292-09, page 2, paragraph 1.10)

This document is intended to assist the playground owner in making their playground a well-maintained and accessible area. It does not imply that an injury cannot occur. For more information about the IPEMA certification program, or to print a copy of our IPEMA certificate, please go to www.ipema.org.